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THESIS

**TOWARD A NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:
A UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN FOR THE
NEW WORLD ORDER**

by

John T. Quinn II
December, 1993

Thesis Advisor:

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Toward a New Strategic Framework:
A Unified Command Plan for the
New World Order

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of


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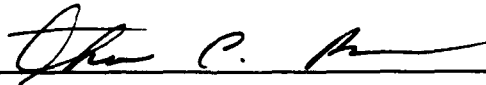

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ABSTRACT

Since its origins in the years immediately following the Second World War, the Unified Command Plan (UCP) has evolved through the combined effects of external pressure from strategic planning for a global war with the Soviet Union and the internal bureaucratic and doctrinal infighting among the Joint Staff and the various services. This infighting was not merely over service 'turf battles', but also touched the very heart of the individual services' philosophies on command in war.

This thesis follows the history of that evolutionary process since World War II with an eye toward a future revision to the UCP. Given the fundamentally altered geo-strategic situation brought about by the collapse of the Soviet Union, the author argues for a complete revision of the UCP based on distinct post-Cold War theater and regional missions. Instead of consolidating the bulk of U.S.-based conventional forces into the U.S. Atlantic Command, the author proposes the retention of several separate (but joint) 'strategic' conventional forces commands based on mission, readiness, and deployability/sustainability criteria.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since its origins in the years immediately following the Second World War, the Unified Command Plan (UCP) has evolved through the combined effects of external pressure from strategic planning for a global war with the Soviet Union centered on Europe and the internal bureaucratic and doctrinal infighting among the Joint Staff and the various services. The size, scope, and service orientation of the Unified Commands that resulted from this infighting reflected not merely the winners and losers of these Pentagon 'turf battles' but instead ran much deeper, touching the very heart of the individual services' philosophies on command in war.

These philosophies have been nearly diametrically opposed for much of the past half century. At one extreme, the U.S. Air Force, with its espousal of the doctrine of centralized command and control of both strategic and tactical aviation under a single air commander, best represents what can be referred to as the 'unity of command by force type' (land, air, and sea) view. The Army has generally favored this approach as well, although its field commanders usually have been reluctant to separate the post of unified Commander in Chief (CinC) from that of ground (or land) forces commander.

At the other extreme is the U.S. Navy, which tends to favor the apportionment of its various air, surface, sub-surface, and

Marine forces into standing task forces - although they remain under the overall command of the numbered fleet commanders and oceanic fleet CinCs and can be readily reorganized if required. This fleet organization best represents the 'unity of command by area' approach, since the local area or task force commander is generally given a slice of every element in order to control his battlespace. The Marine Corps also subscribes to this approach, yet within its own air-ground task forces, it insists on having centralized command of both fixed and rotary-winged aviation.

This thesis follows the history of the evolution of the UCP over the last fifty years with a eye toward its future revision. Given the fundamentally altered geo-strategic situation brought about by the collapse of the Soviet Union, the author argues for a complete revision of the UCP based on distinct post-Cold War theater and regional missions. Three theater commands - Europe, Northeast Asia, and Southwest Asia - would exist to lead and support the narrow, focused mission of coalition defense of these vital allies. Two broader regional or area commands - Atlantic and Pacific - would be responsible for the full range of military activities elsewhere - outside of the theater command boundaries.

The issue of the appropriate role of 'forces commands' in this framework is also addressed. In contrast to the recently-instituted consolidation of the bulk of U.S.-based conventional forces into the U.S. Atlantic Command, the author proposes the retention of several separate (but joint) 'strategic'

conventional forces to be based on mission, readiness, and deployability/sustainability criteria.

The result would be four 'strategic' conventional groups of forces: a Rapid Reaction/Contingency Force, an Atlantic and a Pacific Expeditionary Force, and a Mobilization/Reinforcing Force. The Expeditionary Forces would be assigned to the revised Atlantic and Pacific Commands, while the Rapid Reaction and Mobilization Forces would remain under the direct control of the National Command Authority.

An appendix provides an illustrative proposal for revising service roles and missions. The author maintains that some of the disputed roles and missions - particularly Close Air Support (CAS) and long range air defense artillery - are intimately tied to the larger issue of unity of command, and thus a solution must be found in that context. The solution proposed is to institutionalize a 'battlefield' split whereby the Army and Marines would assume control of all CAS and short range air defense assets, while the Air Force and/or Navy take over control of the long range (theater) strike and air defense assets.

The net effect of the proposed changes would be to create a new strategic framework that better reflects the regional focus and force requirements of the post-Cold War era. Within this framework, the various theater, regional, and forces commands are designed to be joint in outlook yet constituted along mission and functional lines in order that they be fully capable of meeting the likely warfighting challenges of the Twenty-first Century.

I. INTRODUCTION

"Unity of Command" has long been recognized as one of the key principles under which U.S. military forces in the field should operate in time of war, yet this principle has proven to be exceedingly difficult to translate into reality over much of the last century. As late as 1927, when *Joint Action of the Army and the Navy* (JAAN) was revised by the Joint Board of the Army and Navy, coordination and mutual cooperation were seen to be the normal command relations between Army and Navy forces, with more formalized but temporary subordination of one service's forces to the other (depending on which service had the "paramount" interest) to be directed only in time of emergency and on an as required basis. The full subordination of the forces of one service to those of another was the option of last resort, and only at the direction of the President.¹

The emergence of two factors combined to fundamentally change this approach to joint command in war. First, the rise of aviation as an increasingly independent arm of

¹see C. Kenneth Allard, Command, Control, and the Common Defense (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990) 95-96.

service within the Great Powers' military establishments throughout the 1920s and 1930s served to further blur the already hazy distinction between where a naval operation ended and a land campaign began. Not being a continental power in the traditional sense of the term, the United States military was largely able to maintain this artificial separation between the two. With neither Mexico nor Canada viewed as a serious military threat, the expectation remained that, aside from a few distant territories and island outposts in the Pacific, a potential enemy would be met by the Navy hundreds of miles from U.S. shores. If the U.S. Fleet was somehow unable to halt an invasion force after the projected Mahanian-style battle for command of the sea, then the Army would attempt to defend U.S. territory through its employment of coastal artillery, aviation, and - if necessary - mobile ground forces. The growing range and capabilities of combat aircraft began to fundamentally alter the expected pattern of conflict, and air power enthusiasts in both the Army and the Navy began to argue the case that aviation would be the pre-eminent arm in both the offense and the defense in wars of the future.

The gathering storm clouds over Europe and the Far East in the late 1930s proved to be the second and decisive factor in the transition from mutual cooperation to unity of command. The speed of Hitler's conquests in Europe, and in

particular the *Blitzkrieg*-style of warfare employed by his forces, provided proof to many that by the time of the commencement of hostilities, it was already too late to develop effective joint command arrangements. The rapidity of modern war now demanded that unity of command be worked out ahead of time and that the joint commander be allowed to employ all the resources at his disposal in the execution of his assigned mission. Unfortunately for the United States, this lesson was not driven home until a disastrous string of defeats was suffered at the hands of Imperial Japan in December 1941.

In the most infamous of these defeats at Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands, the immediate post-mortem analyses focused on the divided command arrangements for local defense and the parallel chains of service command that met only in Washington, D.C. at the White House. Within the first months of the war, the institution of joint command was quickly agreed upon between the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army (CSA) and the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) for the major American overseas territories and bases, yet this agreement in principle proved to be in many ways the easiest part of the process. In fact, as the saying goes, 'the devil was in the details' when it came to the inauguration of joint command arrangements.

Although established under the guise of wartime necessity, by the end of 1945 it became clear to most senior military officers that the wartime system of unified command ought to be maintained in some semblance in the post-war period. The major problem, as noted above, was in the nature of the command relationships between the forces of the various services and the joint commander. Broadly speaking, there has existed since the Second World War a fundamental philosophical disagreement between the Naval Services on the one hand and the Army and the Air Force on the other, over how forces are to be subordinated to a unified commander. The Army view in 1945 (and the Air Force view later) was "that command should be exercised through service commanders, unifying the great bulk of each service rather than on the basis of territorial areas as had been the case during the war".² The Navy view, on the other hand, was that unity of command by area within a unified command was essential to the successful execution of a commander's mission.

As it has evolved since then, these two often diverging preferences of 'command by area' versus 'command by force type' have helped shape the Unified Command Plan of today.

²James F. Schnabel, The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy: Volume I: 1945-1947, (Washington, D.C.: Historical Division, Joint Secretariat, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1979) 173.

For most of the past fifty years a third element - that of strategic planning for a global war with the Soviet Union - has served to divert, restrict, or submerge the essential friction between these divergent philosophies. With the demise of the Cold War, the constraints imposed by a projected global war centered on a multinational coalition defense of Western Europe have essentially disappeared. Thus in theory, U.S. strategic planners are now free to concentrate on a region-by-region approach to unified command arrangements.

The objective of this thesis is to trace the evolution of the Unified Command Plan (UCP) since World War II in order to assess the sources of the changes to the plan over time. Particular attention is paid in the thesis to the 'command by area' versus the 'command by forces' struggle, with the impact of coalition warfare against the Axis Powers and, later, the overlay of war planning against the Soviet Union accentuated in order to highlight its effects on the more basic 'area' versus 'forces' contest. Presented for the reader's consideration at the end is a new proposed framework for a Unified Command Plan that better addresses the strategic needs of the United States today and into the future.

II. THE ORIGINS OF THE SYSTEM OF UNIFIED COMMAND: WORLD WAR TWO

A. THE EARLY WAR PERIOD AND UNITY OF COMMAND

Prior to the United States' rather sudden entry into the Second World War in December of 1941, the issue of "unity of command" was one that had been the subject of much professional discussion and had in fact been enshrined as a principle of war by the Army, with the Navy accepting it (at least formally) as being equally as valid as "mutual cooperation".³ Beyond this universal recognition of the importance of unity of command in the largely anticipated war to come, prior to the actual outbreak of hostilities virtually nothing of substance had been accomplished to institute a joint command structure in any prospective theater or region of military operations. To recommend a unified command structure in theory was all well and good, but to actually subordinate the operating forces of one department to the command of the other was beset by problems of Army-Navy rivalry reaching back almost to the founding of the republic - and was unheard of during peacetime.

³Allard, 96.

1. The Development of the Pacific Theater

With tensions between the United States and Japan on the rise in 1940 and 1941, the War Department did make certain adjustments in the command arrangements of its forces in the Philippines in order (it was hoped) to better prepare those forces to meet an expected Japanese attack. Until the summer of 1941, the command of military forces in the Philippines was divided between the Philippine Department, which controlled U.S. Army Forces on the islands and was directly subordinate to the War Department, and the Philippine Army, which reported to the Commonwealth Government. In July 1941, President Roosevelt approved the creation of a new command - the U.S. Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) - and recalled Douglas MacArthur from his retirement post as Military Advisor to the Commonwealth to serve as its commander.⁴ USAFFE was intended to bring all U.S. Army and Army Air Corps forces, as well as the Philippine Army, under unified command, although the U.S. Asiatic Fleet, which then was based at Manila Bay, was to

⁴see Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell, The United States Army in World War II: The War Department: Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1941-1942 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1953) 69.

cooperate with MacArthur but remain under direct Navy command.⁵

This simple act, taken as a measured response to the visibly deteriorating diplomatic situation in the Far East, was to have wide-ranging effects on the establishment of unified commands later on.⁶ Prior to July 1941 (after many earlier debates), one of the central operating tenants of Army-Navy war planning was that it would be neither practical nor possible to hold the Philippines against a determined Japanese assault. As was agreed to by both the Army Chief of Staff, General George Marshall, and his Navy counterpart, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Harold Stark, War Plan RAINBOW 5 called for a general defense of the Eastern and Central Pacific regions. In the Far East,

the Army would defend the Philippine coastal frontier, but no Army reinforcements would be sent to that area. The Navy would support the land and air forces in

⁵see Fleet Admiral Earnest J. King, U.S. Navy at War 1941-1945: Official Reports to the Secretary of the Navy (Washington: United States Navy Department, 1946) 31. From 1 February 1941, the U.S. Navy was organized into the Atlantic, Pacific, and Asiatic Fleets. The senior fleet CINC was also dual-hatted as CINC U.S. Fleet, "chiefly for purposes of standardization". On 18 December 1941, President Roosevelt established CINC U.S. Fleet as a separate billet, and in March 1942 this billet was in turn combined with that of the CNO.

⁶Matloff and Snell, 64-65. The authors note President Roosevelt's tightening economic embargo of Japan and the freezing of Japanese assets in the U.S., which was undertaken in the hopes of pressuring them to evacuate their military forces from mainland China and French Indochina.

the defense of the Far Eastern territories of the Associated Powers, raid Japanese sea communications, and destroy axis forces. The Commander in Chief, United States Asiatic Fleet, would be responsible, in co-operation with the Army, for the defense of the Philippines as long as that defense continued and, thereafter, for the defense of the Malay Barrier, but the Navy, like the Army, planned no reinforcement of its forces in that area.⁷

Roosevelt's decision to establish USAFFE under former Army Chief of Staff Douglas MacArthur, one which was apparently undertaken without first consulting the War Department, fundamentally changed the 'no reinforcement' plan.⁸ This decision was clearly a political one meant to raise the stakes in the war of nerves with Japan and, although the War Department planning staff quickly adjusted to the new circumstances and began to allocate significant resources for the reinforcement of the Philippines, the expectation remained that the Japanese would be able to eventually overcome any American attempt to hold the islands in the first period of a war.⁹

The surprise attacks by Japan on December 7 and 8, 1941, which devastated a significant portion of U.S. naval and air forces in Hawaii and the Far East, added impetus to the decision to create a joint command in the Pacific.

⁷Matloff and Snell, 45.

⁸Matloff and Snell, 67.

⁹Matloff and Snell, 69.

Critics of America's military unpreparedness quickly focused on the awkwardly divided command responsibilities in effect at the time of the surprise attack in the Hawaiian Islands as a major factor in the disaster, although the similar circumstances in the Philippines under a nominally more unified command were largely ignored.¹⁰

In December of 1941, however, both the War and Navy Departments' more immediate concern was the question of what strategy to pursue in the Far East. With the abandonment of the 'no reinforcement' plan several months before, the way was clear in theory to transfer whatever forces were available to the Philippines, although the Navy was not anxious to risk the loss of more ships in support of what could only be seen as a delaying action.¹¹ Also restricting a major effort to hold the Far East was the nascent grand strategy developed over the course of British and American military staff talks, which had proceeded informally for more than a year and had operated under the

¹⁰Matloff and Snell, 81-82. MacArthur, despite several hours warning after the Pearl Harbor attack, lost almost half his Air Force in the December 8 air raid by Japanese forces.

¹¹Matloff and Snell, 69-70. As early as the fall of 1941, the U.S. Navy - in addition to the British, Dutch, and Australian Navies - voiced their inability to sustain the Philippines in the face of a war with Japan. The events of 7-8 December 1941 reinforced this view (see Matloff and Snell, 82, footnote 63.)

premise that the European Theater would receive the priority of effort in a war against the Axis.¹² From his headquarters in Manila, General MacArthur actively sought to promote his vision of a determined defense of the Philippines, which was intended both to sustain the hard-pressed forces of the British Empire and China and to provide the springboard for the eventual counterattack against Japan.¹³

Although still undecided on a long term military strategy for the region, President Roosevelt recognized the need to achieve better strategic coordination between the U.S. and its partners. As part of this effort, a series of conferences were held in the Far East in late December 1941 (at Chungking on the 17th and 23rd and at Singapore on the 18th and 20th) to coordinate strategic policy between the new allies. In a message back to Army Chief of Staff General Marshall, a senior American participant reported that the Singapore conference

showed 'an immediate need for one supreme head over a combined allied staff for detailed coordination of USA

¹²Matloff and Snell, 34-38.

¹³Matloff and Snell, 84. MacArthur "...declared and repeated that the battle of the Philippines was the decisive action of the war in the far Pacific: "If the western Pacific is to be saved it will have to be saved here and now"; and again he said, "The Philippines theater of operations is the locus of victory or defeat." He urged that authorities in Washington review their strategy with this in mind..."

British Australia and Dutch measures...and the strategic direction of all operations in Pacific area.'¹⁴

The report went on to recommend the location of a combined headquarters on Java and indicated that the appointment of an American as the supreme head of this staff was the "unofficial" consensus of the participants.¹⁵

Driven by the same circumstances, the deteriorating military situation in the Far East prompted the search for new bases from which to sustain the fight after the anticipated fall of the Philippines. War Department planners immediately focused on Port Darwin in Northern Australia as the preferred site for an advanced base of operations and by the middle of December, Brig. Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, who had been assigned by Marshall the task of devising a Far East strategy, won both Secretary of War Stimson's and the Chief of Staff's approval for its further development.¹⁶

Although envisioned primarily as an air base and commanded initially by an Air Corps officer, "the forces in Australia thus became the nucleus of a new overseas command even though they were still part of MacArthur's U.S.

¹⁴Matloff and Snell, 87.

¹⁵Matloff and Snell, 87.

¹⁶Matloff and Snell, 87.

Army Forces in the Far East and had their primary mission of getting vitally needed supplies to the Philippines".¹⁷ As the U.S. Army's official history went on to note "it was evident that the establishment of this new command implied a more comprehensive strategy in the Southwest Pacific than the desperate effort to prolong the defense of the Philippines".¹⁸ This decision was to have a profound effect on the conduct of the war in the Pacific and the command arrangements under which it would be fought.

The issue of unity of command in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific was raised in Washington, D.C. during the last week of December 1941 at the ARCADIA conference, which was attended by President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, and their principal military advisors. The British and American Chiefs agreed to the establishment of the Australian-British-Dutch-American (ABDA) Command under Lt. Gen. Sir Archibald Wavell, whose responsibility would encompass the Philippines, the Netherlands Indies, Malaya, and Burma.¹⁹ As proposed by General Marshall, the objective of this command was

¹⁷Matloff and Snell, 88.

¹⁸Matloff and Snell, 88.

¹⁹Matloff and Snell, 123.

to place on a single officer responsibility for initiating action to be taken in Washington and London with reference to strategic deployment to and within the area.²⁰

In order to provide appropriate strategic direction to Wavell and future combined commanders, a new standing British-American military committee was established in Washington consisting of senior officers from both countries who had been in attendance at ARCADIA. This committee, titled the Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS), was to play a vital part in smoothing out allied military and grand strategy differences throughout the war.

The issue of the scope of Wavell's authority over forces assigned to the ABDA Command's area of responsibility surfaced immediately. Under General Marshall's proposal (which was soon adopted), the

Allied Commander would have no authority to move ground forces from one territory to another within the theater. During the period of "initial reinforcements" he could move only those air forces that the governments concerned chose to put at his disposal. He would have no power to relieve national commanders or their subordinates, to interfere in the tactical organization and disposition of their forces, to commandeer their supplies, or to control their communications with their respective governments.²¹

In response to concerns over the amount of limitations placed on Wavell's exercise of command, Marshall replied

²⁰Matloff and Snell, 124.

²¹Matloff and Snell, 125.

that

what he proposed was all that could be done, and declared that "if the supreme commander ended up with no more authority than to tell Washington what he wanted, such a situation was better than nothing, and an improvement over the present situation".²²

Assuming command of ABDA in mid-January, Wavell was confronted with the continuing collapse of British and American defenses in Singapore, Java, and the Philippines. Identifying Australia and Burma as the vital territory to be held, Wavell recommended to the CCS the diversion of resources (an Australian army corps) scheduled for Java to Burma, on the grounds that they could be quickly and successfully brought to bear against the Japanese.²³ In spite of urging by Washington and London that this diversion proceed, the Australian government flatly refused, citing the vulnerability of its northern region and the desire to employ these forces closer to home in order to forestall further Japanese movement southward.²⁴ Unable to quickly shift its meager forces within its area of responsibility, the ABDA Command was soon forced to both abandon the fight for southern Burma and evacuate its headquarters from Java, thus leaving the Dutch to wage their own hopeless struggle

²²Matloff and Snell, 125.

²³Matloff and Snell, 128.

²⁴Matloff and Snell, 130-32.

in the East Indies and signalling the demise of the short-lived combined command.²⁵

With the American position in the Philippines becoming increasingly untenable as well, thought was given to the future of MacArthur's command. At the end of February, Roosevelt made the decision to order MacArthur's withdrawal from Corrigedor with the intention that he assume command of American (and allied) forces in Australia in a reconstituted ABDA Command.²⁶

In Washington, the Joint Chiefs reexamined command arrangements in the Pacific area. Working on the assumption that the world would be subdivided into three major areas - Pacific, Middle and Far East, and Atlantic/European - and that the British would accede to the proposal that the American Joint Chiefs exercise strategic direction over the Pacific, they were then faced with reconciling the competing jurisdictional claims between the Army and the Navy.²⁷ With an already heavy Army presence in Australia and the precedence of the ABDA Command fresh in mind, the question of the subordination of this area to a Supreme Pacific

²⁵Matloff and Snell, 135.

²⁶Matloff and Snell, 165.

²⁷Matloff and Snell, 166-8.

Commander appears to never have been seriously considered by the JCS at the time. Rather, the issue focused on the appropriate boundaries of this projected 'Australian area' command. The Navy argued for narrow boundaries encompassing only the Australian continent and its immediate northern approaches, while the Army's War Plans Division, now under Brig. Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, sought more expansive ones including all territory to the north as well as New Zealand and New Caledonia.²⁸ The JCS compromise between these two views extended the northward boundary of this "Australian Area" to include the Philippines but accepted the Navy's case that New Zealand and New Caledonia were an integral part of the lines of communication for the entire Pacific area and as such were a Navy responsibility. Thus, the Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA) Command was defined first - largely to fit the future needs of MacArthur's combined command - and nearly everything to its east and north east, being defined in what the terms of today refer to as sea lines of communications (SLOCs), was ceded to the Pacific Ocean Area (POA) Command.²⁹

²⁸Matloff and Snell, 168-9.

²⁹Matloff and Snell, 168-9. The area of the Pacific Ocean of the coast of Central and South America remained under the jurisdiction of the Commanding General, Caribbean Defense Command, since this area was deemed integral to the defense of the Panama Canal sea frontier.

Although they were formally established on the same day (30 March 1942), SWPA and POA were recognized to be fundamentally different entities. Douglas MacArthur's command was to be multi-national in character, and thus his authority was limited in certain critical ways. Based on the ABDA experience, the JCS instructed that MacArthur appoint subordinate combined ground, air, and naval commanders, thus insulating him from exercising direct command over U.S. forces with the idea that this would allow him to better play the role of an honest broker.³⁰ The POA Command, under Admiral Chester Nimitz, was recognized to be an entirely American theater command, and thus Nimitz was allowed to retain his direct command of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. His command was subdivided by region, however, in order that the South Pacific (sub-area) commander might more easily coordinate his support of the SWPA.³¹ Thus, the different titles - Supreme Commander for MacArthur versus Commander in Chief for Nimitz - pointed up some important differences in command authority and flexibility between the two neighboring theaters.

³⁰Matloff and Snell, 171.

³¹Matloff and Snell, 169.

2. The Development of the European Theater

Although not specifically addressed during the series of staff meetings revolving around the ARCADIA Conference, the issue of unified command arrangements was lying just below the surface of the debate over Allied grand strategy. Sharp differences emerged between the British approach to strategy, which favored a steady tightening of siege lines around the southern and eastern edges of Western Europe along with the material sustainment of the Soviets - followed by invasion only when the Germans were at the point of near collapse, and the American, which envisioned a rapid concentration of forces in the British Isles for an early invasion of Northwestern Europe. Prior to the outbreak of war, the American planners' guiding principle was

to emphasize the need for economy of effort in "subsidiary" theaters. They classified as subsidiary theaters not only the Far East but also Africa, the Middle East, the Iberian Peninsula, and the Scandinavian Peninsula, in accordance with their premise that the plains of northwest Europe constituted the main theater, where "we must come to grips with the enemy ground forces."³²

The fundamental incompatibility of the two approaches was quite evident even at this early stage, and the competition for scarce resources between "subsidiary" theaters and the main theater was to be a fixture of Allied planning for the next two and a half years.

³²Matloff and Snell, 101.

From the British perspective, the immediate tasks of the available American forces were to relieve the British garrisons in Iceland and Northern Ireland and to open up a second front in North West Africa in the rear of Field Marshall Erwin Rommel's Panzer Army Africa.³³ Although by early spring 1942 the questions of if, how, and when landings in North West Africa (known then as Operation GYMNAST) were to proceed had not been settled, this course of action slowly came to be seen by President Roosevelt as the best option to bring American military forces to bear quickly against Germans. Citing the potential for a rapid transformation of the military situation on the Eastern Front, General Marshall and his staff argued the need to amass forces in the British Isles (known as BOLERO) in order to be able to execute a short-notice attack (SLEDGEHAMMER) across the Channel in late 1942 either to avert a Soviet defeat or to take advantage of a sudden German collapse along lines similar to 1918.³⁴ If circumstances did not necessitate or offer such a course of action, then the buildup in Britain would continue towards a mid-1943 full scale invasion of Northwestern Europe (code named ROUNDUP).

³³Matloff and Snell, 106-8.

³⁴Matloff and Snell, 237.

In May, while the BOLERO versus GYMNAST debate simmered, the more mundane question of the command of the American forces then arriving in the British Isles arose, as well as the need to establish a combined command in anticipation of the planned invasion. Recognizing that the British were unenthusiastic about the prospects of an early (1943) cross-channel invasion, General Eisenhower on his return from a conference in England recommended that the U.S. place an officer there in order to spur the British along in the planning process. Marshall agreed with this assessment and within a week, Eisenhower was picked to fulfill this function and appointed to command the newly-created European Theater of Operations for the U.S. Army (ETOUSA). Established on 10 June 1942, ETOUSA was by Army and Navy agreement a joint command

in which the Army exercised planning and operational control over all U.S. Navy forces assigned to that theater. The Commanding General, ETOUSA, was directed to co-operate with the forces of the British Empire and other nations but to keep in view the fundamental rule "that the forces of the U.S. are to be maintained as a separate and distinct component of the combined forces".³⁵

Encompassing all of Scandinavia, Western Europe (including the Iberian Peninsula), Germany, and Italy, ETOUSA represented the American commitment to the BOLERO/ROUNDUP strategy, and as such it was quickly staffed with key

³⁵Matloff and Snell, 197.

subordinate commanders of the likes of Generals Mark Clark (Ground Forces Commander) and Carl Spaatz (Air Forces Commander) as well as Rear Admiral Henry Hewitt.³⁶

At the end of July, Roosevelt decided in favor of the invasion of French North West Africa (now renamed TORCH), thereby in effect forcing the postponement of a major cross-channel attack until 1944.³⁷ Since the bulk of the forces to be involved in Operation TORCH were to be American, the Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS) determined that the commander of TORCH would be an American and that the 1st of December would be the latest date for the operation, although Roosevelt in a separate directive named 30 October as the by-date.³⁸ On 26 July, Marshall informed Eisenhower that he was to be the Commander-in-Chief, Allied Expeditionary Force for Operation TORCH.³⁹

The decision to launch TORCH, with projected landings both on the Atlantic and the Mediterranean coasts of French North Africa, raised the issue of command arrangements to the forefront once again. Although the landings were to be conducted far from the fighting in Libya

³⁶Matloff and Snell, 197.

³⁷Matloff and Snell, 322.

³⁸Matloff and Snell, 281.

³⁹Matloff and Snell, 287.

and Egypt, later phases of the campaign naturally envisioned a link-up between Alexander's forces and those of Eisenhower. Thus, while starting as essentially two separate theaters of operations, they would be merged into one at some point in the future. This begged the question, driven by the principle of unity of command, of who would be the commander of this merged theater of operations and what authority he would possess.

Before the larger theater command decision could be made, those for the actual operation - ashore and afloat - were determined in accordance with Eisenhower's desires

to fuse into one integrated force the ground, sea, and air elements of the two national military establishments. The principle of unity of command required that the task force attacking each major area should operate under a single commander and that the entire Allied Expeditionary Force under the supreme commander should avoid subdivisions along either national or service lines which seriously impaired the tactical flexibility.⁴⁰

Although it took weeks to finalize, the end result was an arrangement that managed to remain largely faithful to Eisenhower's vision:

the American Commander in Chief, Allied Expeditionary Force, exercised direct command over the commanding generals of the [assault] task forces, indirect command

⁴⁰George F. Howe, The United States Army in World War II: The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Northwest Africa: Seizing the Initiative in the West, (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History of the United States Army, 1991) 33.

through a British Naval Commander in Chief, Expeditionary Force, over the senior naval commanders of both nationalities, and direct command over land-based aviation through British and American air force commanders. The task forces ... were expected to extend their control ashore and to be consolidated into an American Fifth Army and a British First Army.⁴¹

Even after the development of TORCH from an amphibious assault into a 'mature' theater of operation, Eisenhower refrained from appointing a separate ground commander, preferring instead to direct both the overall Allied operation and the *de facto* Army Group ashore. This pattern would be repeated again in the future, although accompanied then by controversy that was somehow avoided during the Northwest African campaign.

The rapid reinforcement of Tunisia by Germany in the wake of TORCH forced a reassessment of the Northwest African campaign and its timing. The initial period immediately following the November 1942 landings was spent consolidating the Allied foothold in Casablanca, Oran and Algiers. With significant German forces in between the Allied commands in both Libya and Algeria, any consideration of a rapid link-up between the two quickly faded by December, although planners looked to the spring of 1943 as the point where Axis forces finally would be expelled from Africa. Looking forward to this eventuality, Marshall once again

⁴¹Howe, 35.

argued for the need to resume the buildup of U.S. forces in the British Isles in preparation for an opportune moment to strike into France. President Roosevelt, however, seeing some merit in the British argument for a campaign in Southern Europe, favored a more balanced buildup both in Britain and in North Africa in order to retain greater strategic flexibility.⁴²

At the end of the year, Army planners were faced with three options as to the point of main effort for military operations in the European Theater in 1943: the strategic bombing of Germany, a thrust by major ground forces into Northwestern Europe, or a campaign in Southern or Southeastern Europe via the Mediterranean Sea. The belief that decisive victory could only be achieved through the occupation of Germany and the defeat of its army limited (in the Army and Navy view) the value of an exclusive air campaign, and British opposition and the diversion of resources for TORCH severely constrained the second. Given the perception at home and abroad that the U.S. was finally fighting against the Germans, "the third alternative - continued pressure in the Mediterranean region - was the line of least resistance". Thus,

⁴²Matloff and Snell, 364.

[T]he strategic objectives for 1943 would be to open the Mediterranean to Allied shipping, and to knock Italy out of the war.⁴³

Once this strategy was finalized at the Anglo-American conference at Casablanca in January 1943, the question of theater command was quickly decided. Once the British Eighth Army crossed the Tunisian frontier, Gen. Eisenhower was to assume the role of Supreme Commander of the theater, with Gen. Sir Harold Alexander as his deputy and in direct command of the final battle for Tunisia. Once Tunisia was secure, Alexander was to be named as the operational commander for the planned invasion of Sicily. Eisenhower's authority did not extend to the Eastern Mediterranean or the Middle East, however; this area was to remain under British strategic direction.⁴⁴

Related to the changes in theater command arrangements was the issue of the control of tactical and strategic air forces. The Army Air Force Commander, Gen. Henry A. "Hap" Arnold, and his subordinates shared a great faith that the concentration of air assets and their centralized direction in a strategic bombing campaign was the recipe for decisive victory against Germany and Japan.

⁴³Matloff and Snell, 366.

⁴⁴Maurice Matloff, The U.S. Army in World War II: The War Department: Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1943-1944 (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History of the United States Army, 1957) 26.

In Operation TORCH, command of air forces had been fairly decentralized. However, problems with air-ground coordination at points in the campaign, and the Air Corps' view that air was greatly misused when treated simply as another supporting arm, combined to strengthen the case for centralized control of theater air assets under one commander.⁴⁵ This line of reasoning prevailed, and with the reorganization of the theater in February Air Chief Marshall Sir Arthur W. Tedder became the chief of the Mediterranean Air Command under Eisenhower, with Maj. Gen. Carl Spaatz as his subordinate in command of the combined Northwest African Air Force. This logic was extended to naval operations as well with the appointment of Admiral Sir Andrew B. Cunningham as Naval Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean.⁴⁶

For the Army Air Force, the further subordination of the heavy and medium bomber groups under a super-theater

⁴⁵Howe, 673. The author summarizes the positions as follows: "Ground commanders generally sought the kind of air support which General Montgomery had received at El Alamein and El Hamma, that is, the use of aviation for neutralizing hostile fires, harassing the enemy, or covering friendly ground movements." Since that system was not in place, they sought "specific air units [to] be placed under a ground commander's direct control." The air argument was (and still is) that "such an arrangement would be wasteful of air power in various ways, and might even cost the ground forces the basic benefit of air superiority."

⁴⁶Matloff, 50.

(Northwest Europe, Mediterranean, and Middle East) bomber campaign against Germany was the ultimate objective. Since the Royal Air Force, long a separate service, was a proponent of the same general theories, the call for a combined bomber offensive was readily agreed upon, although U.S. and British views differed sharply as to the correct tactics for strategic bombing. Agreeing to temporarily subordinate the strategic direction of the bombing offensive to British direction (until the U.S. attained the majority of forces in Europe), the Army Air Force (AAF) nonetheless insisted that operational control of the U.S. bomber forces (8th Air Force in Britain and 15th Air Force in North Africa) remain under a U.S. commander.⁴⁷

Before all of the air issues could be settled, the matter of overall European command needed to be addressed. Although General Marshall was initially in favor of a unified theater encompassing the British Isles to the Middle East under the direction of a Supreme Commander, the needs of Eisenhower in North Africa temporarily forced a change in this approach.⁴⁸ The inability of the Army and Navy to come to a similar arrangement in the Pacific did not bode well for this argument, and there was concern that the U.S. might

⁴⁷Matloff, 380-381.

⁴⁸Matloff, 60.

have to yield the position of Supreme Commander in either the Pacific or in Europe if this was approved.⁴⁹

In order to reflect the reality of the combined Allied command in the Mediterranean, the JCS agreed in January 1943 to the subdivision of the original European Theater of Operations (ETO) into a smaller ETO (encompassing Northwestern Europe), a North African Theater of Operations (NATO), and a Middle East Theater of Operations.⁵⁰ Lt. Gen. Frank M. Andrews was made Commanding General of the new ETO, and Maj. Gen. Louis H. Brereton was put in charge of the Middle East Theater.

B. THE EMERGING CONSENSUS ON JOINT COMMAND ARRANGEMENTS

1. The Aviation Question: Arm or Separate Service?

Faced with the precedent setting agreements between the Army leadership and the British over combined command of Allied forces in the Mediterranean, Army and Navy planners came under increasing pressure to settle once and for all on a mutually acceptable definition of joint command. Fighting off early Navy efforts to define the Army Air Force as a

⁴⁹Matloff, 273.

⁵⁰Matloff, 61-62.

branch or "arm" rather than as the separate service that it was rapidly becoming, the Army insisted that its treatment of the issue with regard to combined commands was the correct approach. In April 1943, the Navy abruptly retreated from its stance and accepted the basic outline for joint command proposed by the Army. Key points agreed upon in the compromise were:

a single commander would be designated by the JCS on the basis of the job to be performed; command perogatives over a joint force were to be exercised as though the forces involved were all Army or all Navy; the JCS would send the joint commander major directives relating to components of the force; the joint commander would not normally be commander of a component of his force; the joint commander would be assisted by a joint staff, representative of the components of his force; and subsidiary joint forces would be organized on the same principles.⁵¹

The experience of the establishment of MacArthur's command in the Southwest Pacific, with its emphasis on the isolation of the Supreme Commander from the direct command of a subordinate component, clearly had an impact on the formulation of this compromise, as did the operational and administrative independence enjoyed by the RAF from the earliest days of the war.

An important side issue between the Navy and the Army Air Force was clarified with the agreement in principle that land-based bombers with the mission of anti-submarine

⁵¹Matloff, 104.

warfare (ASW) would fall under the operational control of the Atlantic Fleet. This in effect was a recognition by the AAF that the unique needs of a commander at sea did require control of land-based aviation units in support of largely naval missions such as ASW, but in return the Navy agreed that the land-based bombers under their control would not engage in strategic bombing missions.⁵² This compromise solidified the Atlantic Fleet's effective control over all service units operating in the Atlantic Ocean (with the exception of the western approaches to the British Isles and the waters immediately adjacent to Northwest Africa), thus making the Atlantic Fleet a joint command in function if not in name.

2. The Evolution of Joint Command in the Caribbean

Disputes over command issues in the Caribbean and the Central and South American regions took on a different form, possibly because of their closeness to home and their relatively well established positions before the outbreak of the war. From the time of the passage of the National Defense Act of 1920, Army forces in overseas U.S. possessions had been organized into military departments

⁵²Matloff, 49. See also Stetson Conn, Rose C. Engelman, and Byron Fairchild, The United States Army in World War II: The Western Hemisphere: Guarding the United States and Its Outposts (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1964) 43.

whose commanders, like their stateside counterparts, exercised "full tactical and administrative control over all Army forces and installations within their areas except for those specifically exempted".⁵³ Naval Districts were also created and revised during this period, although unlike the Army example, the major operational formations were not subordinated to District Command but instead fell under the command of the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet or his subordinate fleets or squadrons.

As was the case with the parallel and separate chain of command between Washington, D.C. and the Hawaiian Department on one hand and the Pacific Fleet and 14th Naval District on the other, the Panama Canal Department before the outbreak of hostilities was paired with the 15th Naval District, although the lack of a resident senior fleet commander apparently resulted in less complicated inter-service relations than those experienced in Hawaii.⁵⁴

⁵³Conn, Engelman, and Fairchild, 17.

⁵⁴Conn, Engelman, and Fairchild, 330. In January 1941, when queried by General Marshall on the need for unity of command in the area, Gen. Van Voorhis, the Commanding General of the Panama Canal Department, indicated that the traditional policy of mutual cooperation with his counterpart at 15th District was sufficient for the time being and that more formal relations would have to be settled when the pressing need arose.

After the fall of France and the Low Countries in June of 1940, the Army and the Navy began to work toward the establishment of joint command arrangements in both Hawaii and Panama, although this process was not completed until after the Pearl Harbor debacle. The Army sought also to improve its internal command lines in the Caribbean by expanding the rather narrow (until then) defensive mission of the Panama Canal Department to include its seaward approaches both through the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. What resulted was the establishment of the Caribbean Defense Command (CDC) on 10 February 1941 and the assumption of that duty by the CG Panama Canal Department ten days later.⁵⁵

The issue of unified command was not completely settled, however, until the internal command relationships were settled. This resulted in a minor battle within the Army itself, with the CG, CDC on one side and the CG, Puerto Rican Department (who was now a subordinate of his) on the other, of a dispute concerning the appropriate geographic subdivision of the command.⁵⁶ Further complicating the

⁵⁵Conn, Engelman, and Fairchild, 330.

⁵⁶Conn, Engelman, and Fairchild, 331. The internal Army dispute centered on "whether the tactical defenses should be organized along lines similar to those of the administrative organization and assigned to the sectors or be placed in a theater-wide functional grouping under a single commander..."

issue was the desire of the Army Air Force to retain direct control over all Army aviation in the CDC under what today would be known as a theater air commander rather than their direct subordination to the various sector and base commanders. Although the first CG, CDC (Gen. Van Voorhis) - against the advice of Gen. Marshall - favored giving certain sector commanders direct control of both ground and air assets, he was replaced in August 1941 by his subordinate air commander, Maj. Gen. Frank M. Andrews, who promptly set about re-organizing the Caribbean Air Force into a theater air force command headquarters (later to become the 6th Air Force).⁵⁷

Adjacent to the Caribbean Defense Command, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Harold Stark in the fall of 1941 proposed the establishment of a unified command under Navy jurisdiction to be called the Caribbean Coastal Frontier. This move was opposed by the CDC commander, Gen. Andrews, on the grounds that his command was the best solution to the problem of "all-around defense of the area from any

⁵⁷Conn, Engelman, and Fairchild, 333-335. The authors relay that Gen. Van Voorhis held to the position "that the Panama Canal air forces 'should not go beyond the immediate sphere of their operations...in defense of the canal, for which they were initially provided" and that these units "should not 'be looked upon by the War Department as constituting a force available for operations throughout the theater'."

direction".⁵⁸ The Navy view held sway (although the issue went all the way up to President Roosevelt), and the resulting compromise provided for the creation of the Caribbean Coastal Frontier as a separate unified naval command while the Panama Coastal Frontier, consisting of the waters to the east and west of the isthmus, was subordinated under the CG, CDC.⁵⁹

3. The Resolution of the Anglo-American Dispute over European Theater Command Arrangements

Late in 1943, with the U.S. and Great Britain at a virtual impasse over the timing and advisability of a cross-channel assault, the issue of unified command took on a curious aspect. Up until that point in the war, unified command arrangements were settled largely as an afterthought once the basic agreement on combined strategy had been resolved.⁶⁰ In the second half of 1943, however, the question of future unified commands in the European Theater took on the trappings of a proxy war between the Allies,

⁵⁸Conn, Engelman, and Fairchild, 352.

⁵⁹Conn, Engelman, and Fairchild, 410-11. see also the unpublished brief entitled Decisions Leading to the Establishment of Unified Commands (1941-1948), hereafter referred to as Decisions 41-48, JCS Histories, 15-17.

⁶⁰The example of MacArthur's appointment is the exception, but since it occurred in a theater under the executive control of the JCS, it - unlike the Atlantic/European theater, which fell under the CCS - was an exclusively U.S. decision to make.

with the shape of the combined theaters and the nationality of their commanders threatening to decide issues of grand strategy.

The Mediterranean proved to be the test case, with the British Chiefs' proposal in November to unify the entire area under one Allied commander. Their argument was that it "would give greater flexibility to operations in the Mediterranean and would place under the CCS the additional forces available in the Middle East".⁶¹ General Marshall and his staff, however, viewed this as simply a ploy to allow the British, who had insufficient forces in the Middle East to launch contemplated assaults against Greece and Yugoslavia, to gain the necessary resources to go ahead with these plans. Frustrated at what he saw as an already wasteful scattering of precious ground and air forces in the Mediterranean, Marshall proposed that

the JCS take the position that a supreme commander be designated for all British-American operations against Germany. Under such a commander were to be appointed an over-all commander for northwestern European operations and an over-all commander for southern European operations, the latter to be responsible for all operations in the Mediterranean.⁶²

Anticipating British resistance to such a proposal, the Army planners' solution was simply to stonewall the British by

⁶¹Matloff, 271.

⁶²Matloff, 271.

not agreeing to any changes in Mediterranean command changes until (1) the issue of grand strategy was firmly resolved and (2) the related issue of "the responsibilities of the over-all commander in the United Kingdom, the command setup for the U.S. Air Forces, and the control over resources in the Middle East should be determined."⁶³

C. UNIFIED COMMAND IN THE LATE WAR PERIOD

1. OVERLORD and the European Theater of Operations

In Europe, the rapid conquest of Sicily and the subsequent Allied landings on the Italian mainland in mid-1943 conformed largely to the British Chiefs of Staff view of the appropriate grand strategy for the war against Hitler, but the operational stalemate that quickly formed in the drive up the peninsula lent decisive weight to the American argument that the only way to end the war in 1944 or 1945 was to strike directly into Northwestern Europe. Faced with their national preferences and the stalemate on the Italian front, the Allied leaders met in Cairo (the SEXTANT talks) in December to attempt to work out a mutually agreeable grand strategy for 1944 and beyond.

⁶³Matloff, 274.

At Cairo, strategic realities, a critical shortage of landing craft, and the agreement to maintain the Combined Bomber Offensive against the German industrial heartland as the highest priority paved the way for the decision to launch a cross-channel assault in May of 1944. Once an agreement was reached on the prioritization of Northwest Europe over Southern Europe, the Joint Chiefs were willing to settle for the division of the European theater into separate northwestern and southern theaters of operations. Given that in preparation for the invasion of France, many of the American forces in the Mediterranean would be redeployed to the British Isles and thus the theater (with the addition of the Middle East) would become a predominately British show, it was agreed that a British officer would be nominated by Churchill for the post of Supreme Commander, Mediterranean. Likewise, the anticipated majority of American forces in the attack into France dictated that an American be placed in charge. On 5 December 1943, Roosevelt chose Eisenhower for the position of Supreme Commander of the projected operation, by then known as OVERLORD.⁶⁴

Eisenhower's plan for the structure of his command largely followed the outline of his North African and

⁶⁴Matloff, 381.

Italian experiences, with some notable differences. As was his preference, naval forces in support of OVERLORD were to be placed under the combined command of a British officer, Admiral Sir Bertram H. Ramsay.⁶⁵ Instead of a single combined air forces command, however, there were to be two, due to the tug of war between the continuing high priority given to the Combined Bomber Offensive versus recognition that the tactical air forces might be unable to support the fighting in France until advance bases were established. Although he wanted full control over both tactical and strategic air forces, Eisenhower settled for the formation of an Allied Expeditionary Air Force (consisting of the U.S. 9th Air Force and the RAF Tactical Air Force, to be commanded by Air Chief Marshall Leigh-Mallory) to be fully subordinated to him, and the temporary control as OVERLORD approached of the British Bomber Command and the newly created United States Strategic Air Forces (USSTAF, consisting of the 8th Air Force and the 15th Air Force, under Lt. Gen. Carl Spaatz).⁶⁶

With the projected employment of two Army Groups in France within a few months of the invasion, the issue of an

⁶⁵Forrest C. Pogue, The United States Army in World War II: The European Theater of Operations: The Supreme Command, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1954) 46-47.

⁶⁶Pogue, 48.

overall ground forces commander was raised late in 1943. It was eventually determined that the commander of the British 21st Army Group, which was to be established ashore before the American 12th Army Group, would exercise operational control of all Allied forces ashore until the 12th Army Group headquarters (HQ) was activated. Upon its activation, both Army Groups would fall under the direct command of Eisenhower, who intended to have his forward HQ established in France by then.⁶⁷ Thus, Eisenhower held to his previously developed preference for the direct command of several major ground formations, in addition to his command over preferably combined air and naval formations, rather than for the appointment of a separate combined ground forces commander.

By October of 1944, with Allied forces firmly ashore in France and the Tactical Air Forces operating from advance bases, further modifications of command arrangements were made. With the reassignment of Leigh-Mallory to Southeast Asia, the Allied Expeditionary Air Forces Command was disestablished, and the 9th Air Force and the RAF Tactical Air Force came under the direct command of Eisenhower, although they received taskings directly from their respective national Army Group HQs. It was during August

⁶⁷Pogue, 261-262.

of 1944 as well that Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, Commanding General of the British 21st Army Group, repeatedly called for the establishment of a separate Combined Ground Forces Commander under the Supreme Commander who would be responsible for the conduct of the ground campaign in France. This plan would consolidate the command of the 21st, 12th, and (later) 6th Army Groups under a principal subordinate (read Montgomery), thus in theory allowing the Supreme Commander to distance himself from the day-to-day operations of these forces and to focus instead on the 'strategic' direction of the land, sea, and air campaign closing in on Germany from the West. Eisenhower again rejected this approach, preferring instead to retain direct command of his major ground formations in addition to controlling the overall strategic campaign in Northwestern Europe.⁶⁸

The subordination of the 6th U.S. Army Group to Eisenhower's Supreme Headquarters after its drive up the Rhone River Valley from southern France (with its provisional Tactical Air Force in support) completed the final major reorganization of the Allied forces before the

⁶⁸see David Eisenhower, Eisenhower At War 1941-1945 (New York: Vintage Books, 1987) 421-23.

German surrender in May 1945.⁶⁹ With the cessation of hostilities against Germany, Eisenhower received a new mandate from the Joint Chiefs in June in which he was to serve as the Commanding General, U.S. Forces, European Theater in addition to his duties as Military Governor, thereby preserving American unity of command in Europe.⁷⁰

2. Unity of Command and the End of the War in the Pacific

Throughout the first three years of the war in the Pacific, Admiral King and his subordinates had argued vigorously but to no avail for the unification of the Pacific theater under the command of Admiral Nimitz. For many reasons, including the JCS calculation that an American might not be able to hold the key position of Supreme Commander in both a single united Pacific Theater and a united European Theater, this consolidation was never ordered by the JCS, but the issue remained under review.⁷¹

⁶⁹Pogue, 455. See the chart on this page for the depiction of the 1 May 1945 Allied Expeditionary Force (AEF) Operational Chain of Command.

⁷⁰see JCS Special Historical Study entitled History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, (Washington, D.C.: Historical Division, Joint Secretariat, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1977) 1.

⁷¹Matloff and Snell,

The settling of Allied command arrangements with the division of Europe into two theaters in late 1943 reduced the pressure to unify the effort in the Pacific for a while, but by late 1944 it became increasingly obvious that a merging of the war effort against Japan would be necessary at some point. With MacArthur's drive from Australia culminating in the recapture of the Philippines and Nimitz' conquest of the Central Pacific island chains, Formosa and Okinawa became obvious targets for their respective commands, but after that logic dictated a single commander for the assault on the Japanese home islands. In the spring of 1945, "... the joint planners prepared detailed plans for the assault on Kyushu (coded OLYMPIC) scheduled for 1 November 1945, and for the final descent upon Honshu, set for 1 March 1946".⁷²

As a precursor to the assault, the JCS once again revisited the issue of unity of command. In February, General Marshall recommended to the JCS that command of service forces be returned to their respective senior commanders in the Pacific, and that command of further operations against Japan should be designated on a case-by-case basis. The Commanding General, Army Air Forces, also indicated the desire for the unification of the Pacific, but

⁷²Matloff, 536.

he argued for coequal land, sea, and air component commanders under one Supreme Commander. In the case that a co-equal air commander was not approved by the JCS, General Arnold requested that the Twentieth Air Force in the Pacific be kept under the direct control of the JCS.⁷³

Following largely along the lines recommended by Marshall, the JCS in April made modifications to the command arrangements in the Pacific whereby MacArthur became the commander of all U.S. Army forces in the region and Nimitz the commander of all naval forces. Each was charged with making his forces available for operations against Japan as directed by the JCS, although no mention of who was to command the operation was made. CINCPAC, believing that the lack of a modification to his basic wartime area of responsibility meant that the Army forces in his area should remain under his direct command, strenuously objected to the new directive from the JCS.⁷⁴

As for the specific unified command arrangements for the planned assault against Japan,

[I]n May 1945 the JCS issued a directive charging MacArthur with conduct of the campaign against Kyushu and Nimitz with the responsibility for the naval and amphibious phases of the operation.⁷⁵

⁷³see Decisions 41-48, 32.

⁷⁴Schnabel, 172-173.

⁷⁵Schnabel, 172-173.

The use of the atomic bomb against Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August and the subsequent Japanese surrender obviated the need for the final unification of the Pacific. In its wake, MacArthur quickly assumed his duties as Commander of Occupation Forces and Military Governor of Japan, and Nimitz assumed a less visible role overseeing the transportation and demobilization of the massive American forces in the Pacific and the internship of Japanese forces throughout the vast region. However, the JCS directive of April 1945 remained in effect, setting the stage for the first of a series of post-war debates on the appropriate internal structure of a unified command.⁷⁶

3. World War II: An Assessment

The Second World War experience profoundly changed the outlook of both the Army and the Navy concerning the issue of unity of command. Each recognized that the pre-war tradition of "mutual cooperation" was dead and gone, but it remained to be seen exactly how a new pattern of unified command would be put into practice.

The Navy carried away from the war the belief that its scattered numbered fleets and task forces functioned best under the centralized command of the Atlantic and Pacific Fleet commanders. These fleet operating areas also

⁷⁶Schnabel, 173.

constituted natural geographic areas of responsibility (AORs) that were highly distinct - and thus required a separate but still unified command structure - from the continental theaters of Europe and Asia. Following the precedent of the Pacific Ocean Area Command, within these oceanic theaters, subordinate joint task forces operating within sub-unified area commands could be assembled to execute the campaigns and operations as the situation dictated.

The Army and Army Air Force also possessed viewpoints validated (in their eyes) by wartime experience concerning the most efficient way to manage and command their forces within a unified theater. The Army leadership - aside from MacArthur - had developed during the war a preference to combine the posts of CINC and Ground Forces Commander in such a way that skewed the developing "holy trinity" concept of co-equal ground, air, and naval component commanders in a theater of war. The Army Air Force did not argue with this "Eisenhower" approach to internal theater command arrangements as long as, within that theater structure, "unity of command" of the air war was established - under Army Air Corps direction.

Further complicating inter-service relations at war's end was the emerging institutional independence of the Air Force and its thinly-veiled desire to bring under its

domain all or most of the tactical and strategic aviation of the United States. This, of course, directly threatened the structure and, possibly, the very existence of the Navy and Marine Air arms that were the result of almost three decades worth of effort and whose wartime performance had - in the sea services' eyes - validated their existence at least as well as the Army Air Corps' strategic bombing campaign. Although the Navy and the Marine Corps were to emerge by the end of the decade with their air arms under-funded though doctrinally intact, the acrimony and bloodletting of the post-war defense unification battle would weigh heavily on unified command issues for years afterward.

III. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND EVOLUTION OF THE UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN 1946-1986

A. THE IMMEDIATE POST-WAR PERIOD

The debates over the shape of the unified command structure in the year and a half following VJ day are of particular interest to the strategic planners of the 1990s, because they provide a refreshingly honest record of the differences between the various services that is largely devoid of any mention of the 'global communist threat' that was soon to overlay almost every aspect of war planning for almost half a century. In many ways the concerns expressed then by the services and the CinCs are again relevant in the post-Cold War strategic environment. Thus, a careful review of the immediate post-World War II positions on unified command is particularly important for this study.

1. The Post-War Pacific Turf Battle

From the end of the war against Japan in August 1945 until the adoption of a formal unified command plan in December 1946, the major source of inter-service contention was the structure of the system of joint command in the Pacific region. The April 1945 directive by the JCS returning command of service components to the senior Army and Navy commanders in the region continued to prove a

source of ire to Admiral Nimitz. In February 1946 the CNO again raised the issue of Pacific command to the JCS, arguing that the JCS directive of April 1945 had created an "ambiguous situation in POA with respect to defensive responsibilities" and as an example pointed to the problem of Army air defense units in POA responding to directives from MacArthur, whose headquarters was in Japan.⁷⁷ To the Navy, this confused command situation seemed to invite another Pearl Harbor-type of debacle.⁷⁸

The CNO's solution to this perceived problem was to establish a separate unified theater encompassing Japan, China, and Korea, with the rest of the Pacific "constituted under a single commander with headquarters in Hawaii, who, assisted by a joint staff, would exercise unity of command of all U.S. forces in the area...".⁷⁹ The Joint Chiefs were unable to agree on this proposal, and they once again postponed for the time being action to resolve the issue.

2. The Outline Command Plan

In July 1946 the Pearl Harbor Congressional Committee published its findings, which as expected, recommended the immediate institution of unity of command

⁷⁷Decisions 41-48, 35.

⁷⁸Schnabel, 177.

⁷⁹Decisions 41-48, 35.

throughout all military and naval bases overseas. Under this increased pressure for action, service planners representing both the Navy and the War Departments sought to fashion a solution consistent with the major findings of the report. Areas of agreement included (1) the institution of unified command in established theaters, (2) the provision of a joint staff for each unified theater, (3) the JCS should be the arbiter of any major transfer of forces between theaters, and (4) service components were free to communicate with their service headquarters concerning matters of administration, training, and supply.⁸⁰ Areas of disagreement again included the number and the geographic boundaries of unified commands in the Pacific region. Queried again on their opinions concerning Pacific command arrangements, Gen. MacArthur maintained that the Pacific "was a single strategic area and that its geographical division into two command components was unsound" and he "opposed any compartmentalization which would separate the central from the western area of the Pacific". In particular, MacArthur objected to the "lack of depth of area under the command of the western Pacific commander" that would result from a division of the area.⁸¹

⁸⁰Decisions 41-48, 37.

⁸¹Decisions 41-48, 37-38.

Admiral Towers, who was Nimitz' replacement in Hawaii after the latter's elevation to CNO, favored the dissolution of CINCPAC and the division of the Pacific into Western and Central Theaters. Unlike MacArthur, he felt that Alaska should be included as part of the Pacific area and that it should fall under the area of responsibility of the Central Pacific Theater, which would also control the Pacific Fleet.⁸²

In response to Gen. MacArthur's opposition to the division of the Pacific area, JCS Chairman Adm. Leahy in early September forwarded a memorandum to Gen. Eisenhower, Marshall's replacement as the Army Chief of Staff, in which he put forward his views on the issue:

If MacArthur's theory of Command for a General War in the Pacific is correct, and I cannot as yet accept it as correct, it could be placed in operation in [an] emergency at any time by combining MacArthur's present area and the Central Pacific area under one commander *if a rare military genius should be available and considered capable of conducting operations at the same time in China, Alaska, and all the islands of the Pacific Ocean, and possibly elsewhere. Combined efforts of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the last war encountered great difficulty in supervising much more restricted operations.*⁸³ (emphasis mine)

In an attempt to break the impasse over command relationships in the Pacific, Gen. Eisenhower on 17 September 1946 forwarded a proposal to the JCS of an

⁸²Decisions 41-48, 38.

⁸³Decisions 41-48, 43.

'Outline Command Plan' that delineated responsibility for all overseas forces to a group of Unified Commands. Under the proposal, six unified commands would be created:

(1) Western Pacific (to include China, Korea, Japan the Philippines, the Ryukyus, the Bonins, and the Marianas)

(2) Central Pacific

(3) Alaska

(4) Northeast (consisting of Newfoundland, Labrador, Greenland, and Iceland)

(5) Caribbean

(6) European

Each would be staffed jointly and would be directly responsible to the JCS, and under each CinC would be subordinate service component commanders who would be entitled to deal freely with their service headquarters on non-joint matters such as training, administration, and supply.⁸⁴

Admiral Nimitz objected to several aspects of Eisenhower's proposals. With postwar naval strength declining precipitously, Nimitz argued that major fleet task forces should not be tethered permanently to a particular theater of war, but rather that they should be temporarily detailed to a CINC on an as-required basis. He used the comparison of naval task forces with the nascent developing

⁸⁴Schnabel, 177-178.

strategic air forces concept, describing both as providing essentially similar 'strategic' reach. He thus maintained that numbered fleets and task forces should be supported by CINCs in the way that strategic air forces were to be supported, but in addition he asked that the major fleets be assigned unified command responsibilities for the broad oceanic areas adjacent to the U.S. mainland and its territories.⁸⁵

Nimitz in early October followed up his criticism with a unified command proposal of his own, which sought to establish eight commands:

- (1) Far East Theater
- (2) Pacific Ocean Theater
- (3) Alaskan Defense Command
- (4) Northeast Defense Command
- (5) Atlantic Ocean Theater
- (6) Panama Theater
- (7) European Theater
- (8) Mediterranean Theater

Although no formal action was taken on this proposal, it is instructive on the Navy's thinking at this period in the U.S. military debate.⁸⁶

⁸⁵Schnabel, 178-179.

⁸⁶Schnabel, 179-180.

In late October 1946, designated operations deputies from the Navy, Army, and Army Air Force presented a compromise plan on which it was hoped the basis for a satisfactory solution to the problem could be found. Its broad outlines were as follows:

- (1) Far East/ Western Pacific Command
- (2) Pacific Ocean/Central Pacific Command
- (3) Alaskan Command
- (4) Northeast Command
- (5) Atlantic Fleet
- (6) Caribbean Command
- (7) European Command

The Navy had several relatively minor reservations with the plan, primarily dealing with the inclusion of the Bonins and the Marianas in the Far East/Western Pacific Command. The Navy's stand was supported by JCS Chairman Admiral Leahy, who felt that in an emergency these islands could be readily transferred to the Far East Command if required.⁸⁷

Another factor complicating the resolution of the problem was a last-minute proposal by Gen. Spaatz, Arnold's successor as CG, Army Air Forces, which sought to place the Alaskan and Northeast Commands in a supporting position to CG, Strategic Air Command. The Navy objected to the

⁸⁷Schnabel, 180-181.

implication that other theater CINCs as well could be placed in such a subordinate position to an Army Air Force command, and thus Nimitz demanded clarification of SAC's authority and responsibility relating to other CinCs. A compromise was quickly forged by Eisenhower whereby the JCS, and not CG, SAC, was to direct required support by theater CINCs and it was clarified that SAC did not own the air forces of theater CinCs. In regard to the Bonins and Marianas, they would belong to the Far East Command, but purely naval supporting functions located there would remain under the control of the Pacific Fleet. China would fall under the direct purview of the JCS except under an emergency, when CinC Far East Command would assume responsibility for and control of this area.⁸⁸

Thus, the JCS proposal presented to President Truman on 12 December 1946 was as follows:

- (1) Far East Command (included Japan, Korea, the Ryukyus, the Philippines, the Marianas, and the Bonins)
- (2) Pacific Command
- (3) Alaskan Command
- (4) Northeast Command (Newfoundland, Labrador, and Greenland)
- (5) Atlantic Fleet

⁸⁸Schnabel, 182-183.

(6) Caribbean Command

(7) European Command

In addition, the Strategic Air Command, which was to include all U.S.-based strategic air forces, was established under the direct control of the JCS.⁸⁹ Other major aspects of the plan included the formalization of the role of the JCS in its exercise of the "strategic direction over all elements of the armed forces" as well as the provision that all forces not specifically assigned to a theater CinC would "remain under the operational control of the respective services".⁹⁰

In accordance with the plan, the Far East, Pacific, and Alaskan Commands were brought into being on 1 January 1947. On March 15, the European Command was established, as was the Atlantic Fleet on 1 November (subsequently renamed on 1 December 1947 as the Atlantic Command, then with joint responsibilities), while the Northeast Command was not stood up until late 1950.⁹¹ At the suggestion of the CNO, a naval specified command entitled Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (with the acronym CINCNAVEASTLANTMED, soon to be shortened to CINCNELM) was

⁸⁹Schnabel, 184.

⁹⁰Schnabel, 185.

⁹¹Schnabel, 185-186.

established in November 1947 under the direct control of the JCS, and in 1948 it was given authority for "joint planning at the theater level" in its area of responsibility.⁹²

3. The National Security Act of 1947 and its Amendments

Running concurrently with the post-war debate over the structure of the UCP was a larger action within Congress and the Executive Branch to incorporate into law those aspects of the recent wartime experience that had proven to contribute to the successful strategic direction and command of forces in the field. Thus, with the passage of the National Security Act of 1947, the make-up and the activities of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were given legal standing, although the creation of the post of Secretary of Defense served to separate the functions of command and strategic planning, with the former being vested (initially, to a vague and limited degree) in the office of the Secretary and the latter in the Joint Chiefs. Among the duties assigned by the Act to the Joint Chiefs were, "...subject to the authority and direction of the President and the Secretary of Defense..."

(1) to prepare strategic plans and to provide for the strategic direction of the military forces;

⁹²History of the Unified Command Plan, 1946-1977, 5-8.

(2) to prepare joint logistic plans and to assign to the military services logistic responsibilities in accordance with such plans; and,

(3) to establish unified commands in strategic areas when such unified commands are in the interest of national security.⁹³

The position of Chief of Staff to the President was formalized - but not mandated - by the legislation, and the U.S. Air Force was established as a separate department and service, completing a process that had started well before the outbreak of the war.

The 1947 Act left several matters seriously out of balance, particularly the continuing power of the service departments relative to a manpower- and resource-poor Defense Secretariat. Thus, in 1949, at the urging of Secretary Forrestal and others, President Truman proposed several amendments to the Act. The most significant ones included the full subordination of the service departments to the Secretary of Defense, as well as the creation of a presiding (although non-voting) Chairman of the JCS in place of the Chief of Staff to the President.⁹⁴

⁹³Defense Organization: The Need for Change, Staff Report to the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, 99th Congress, 1st Session, October 16, 1985, 140.

⁹⁴Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 140.

B. THE KOREAN WAR AND ITS IMPACT

As the unified command plan had evolved throughout the immediate post-war period, so had a fundamentally different geo-strategic situation with which the U.S. leadership was forced to come to terms. No longer would America be able to draw back to a narrow hemispheric defense policy. The hardening of post-war occupation zones in Europe and the defeat of the Nationalist Chinese in the Far East and their subsequent retreat to Formosa contributed to slow the demobilization of the U.S. military and served to involve theater CinCs in day-to-day security and military issues that took on a character altogether different from the "peacetime" operations of a decade before. The Unified Command Plan had entered the age of the Cold War.

1. The Far Eastern Command at War

The invasion of South Korea on June 25, 1950 provided the first wartime test of the Unified Command Plan since its inception in 1946. Although much of mainland Northeast Asia had been removed from the Far Eastern Command's (FECOM) area of responsibility in February 1950, it was quickly restored to MacArthur's portfolio at the outbreak of hostilities. In view of its close proximity to the fighting, FECOM was seen as the logical headquarters through which to deal with the crisis on the Korean

Peninsula. This decision was formalized on 10 July with President Truman's directive to MacArthur assigning him as commander of the United Nations' effort to resist the North Korean assault.⁹⁵

FECOM under MacArthur was organized as prescribed by the UCP of 1946, with some notable exceptions. Separate subordinate air and naval components were established in the form of Commanding General, Far East Air Forces (CG FEAF) and Commander, Naval Forces Far East (COMNAVFE), but MacArthur retained for himself the post of Commanding General, Army Forces Far East (CG AFFE) in addition to his position as theater CinC. The theater staff remained "essentially an Army staff, except for a Joint Strategic Plans and Operations Group (JSPOG) which had Air Force and Navy representation".⁹⁶

For operations in South Korea during the first months of the conflict, MacArthur deputized the CG, 8th Army, Lt.Gen. Walton Walker, as the on-scene 'joint' commander of the forces in the Pusan Perimeter. MacArthur exercised overall strategic direction of the air and naval campaign against the north, as well as the amphibious assault spearheaded by the 1st Marine Division of X Corps

⁹⁵History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 14.

⁹⁶History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 15.

against the North Korean communications during the Inchon-Seoul campaign in September.⁹⁷

2. The Air Force - Marine Corps Dispute over Control of Tactical Aviation

Following the Chinese intervention of November and the subsequent retreat of American forces below Seoul, Marine ground and aviation forces, which had been largely kept separate from the 8th Army as part of the independent X Corps organization controlled by MacArthur, were now brought under the 8th Army's direct command. There then arose to the surface the first of a series of disputes that have continued in one form or another to the present day over the operational control of Marine aviation. The Marines proclaimed the doctrine of air-ground integration, which was modeled closely along naval task force organization lines (except that it was envisioned as a permanent entity), while the Air Force insisted that unity of effort in the air campaign demanded that the senior air commander have the flexibility to employ all the air assets in theater as he saw fit.

This evolution of the 'unity by area' versus 'unity by force type' conflict tended to boil down to the Marine

⁹⁷see Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967) 514-15.

desire for responsive close air support for its ground units versus the Air Force preference for a concentrated strategic air interdiction campaign. The decision tilted increasingly in favor of the Air Force position as the war stretched into 1951, especially after MacArthur's relief in April and his replacement as United Nations commander by Gen. Matthew Ridgeway. Thus, the First Marine Division found itself shuttling between the various Army corps commands under the Eighth Army as the changing tactical situation dictated, while its partnered First Marine Aircraft Wing (1st MAW) became increasingly integrated into the Fifth Air Force's order of battle in support of its air interdiction campaign.⁹⁸ The situation only improved (from the Marine perspective) when, in response to the limited success of the interdiction campaign, the Fifth Air Force in late 1952 "returned most operational planning responsibilities to the 1st MAW", which resulted in 1st MAW then providing "about 40

⁹⁸see Robert Debs Heinl, Soldiers of the Sea: The United States Marine Corps, 1775-1962, (Baltimore: The Nautical and Aviation Publishing Co. of America, 1991) 576-577. Colonel Heinl, a Marine, writes: "In the initial operations, at General MacArthur's specific direction, Marine air had properly been ordered to support the Marine ground troops as an air-ground team. By 1951, unfortunately, other counsels prevailed, and, when the wing resumed active work, it was assigned to Fifth Air Force, placed under centralized control, and used in general support of the Eighth Army as a whole".

percent of all [CAS] strikes along the entire Eighth Army front" in the last period of the war.⁹⁹

3. Late-War and Post-War Changes to the UCP

At the theater level, several changes of significance were instituted. Conforming to the Navy's initial desires in 1946, the Bonin and Marianas Islands were transferred from CINCFE's to CINCPAC's area of responsibility in April 1951, as were the Volcano Islands. The Philippines, the Pescadores, and Formosa followed later in the year, and thus by 1952 the Far East Command's geographic base had shrunk to the area immediately surrounding Japan and the Korean Peninsula.¹⁰⁰ Additionally, the Army component of FECOM had finally been split off into a separate headquarters element, and the billets remaining at the FECOM staff were redistributed to reflect a more joint outlook.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹see Allan R. Millett, Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps (New York: The Free Press, 1980) 515. Millett in pages 502 to 517 thoroughly describes the struggle over Marine aviation during the Korean War.

¹⁰⁰History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 15.

¹⁰¹History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 15.

**C. THE 1956 REORGANIZATION OF THE UNIFIED COMMAND
PLAN AND ITS IMPACT**

1. The Problem and Service' Positions: JCS 1259/348

In conjunction with a March 1955 review of the UCP, the Secretary of Defense directed the JCS to

keep the subject of unified commands under continuous review, recommend changes therein that will simplify and make more effective the unified command structure in the light of changing world conditions, and make a report on the subject to him not less often than annually.¹⁰²

In March 1956 the Joint Strategic Plans Committee assembled a document (JCS 1259/348) that reflected the divergent opinions of the four armed services concerning the future shape of the UCP. In regard to the number of unified commands, it summarized the various service positions at the outset of the debate as follows:

<u>Army View</u>	<u>Navy-Marine Corps View</u>	<u>Air Force View</u>
(1) European	(1) European	(1) European
(2) Atlantic	(2) Atlantic	(2) Atlantic
(3) Alaskan	(3) Alaskan	(3) Alaskan
(4) Pacific	(4) Pacific (to incl.	(4) Pacific (to
(5) Far East	the Far East)	incl. the Far East)
(6) Caribbean		(5) Caribbean

Thus, all agreed on the disestablishment of the Northeast Command, while the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force wanted also to roll up the Far East Command under the Pacific

¹⁰²Report by the Joint Strategic Plans Committee to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Unified Command Plan (JCS 1259/348) of 9 March 1956, pps. 2052-2112, hereafter referred to as JCS 1259/348, 2053.

Command, and the Navy and Marine Corps sought to do the same with the Caribbean Command by its absorption into the Atlantic Command.¹⁰³ The Army desired to expand the AOR of Caribbean Command to include all of Central and South America as well as the Antilles island chain while the Army and Air Force sought to transform both CINCNELM and CINC USAFE from specified commands to subordinate service components of European Command.¹⁰⁴

To delve further into the services' positions on this issue provides the reader with a great deal of insight on the roots of the diverse views on the subject. In the case of the Far East Command (FECOM), where the Navy-Marine-Air Force solution was to merge it under PACOM and create a separate CinC United Nations Command (CINCUNC) in South Korea, the Army's solution was to expand the AOR of FECOM to include all of East and Southeast Asia in order to create a "single unified command covering the entire forward area of contact with the potential enemy".¹⁰⁵ As can be seen, the Army's primary focus was on a unitary enemy (communism) throughout the theater rather than on the local defense of South Korea and Japan, although that was still a factor in

¹⁰³JCS 1259/348, 2054.

¹⁰⁴JCS 1259/348, 2054.

¹⁰⁵JCS 1259/348, 2059.

defense of FECOM. The Army objected that the proposed realignment would create a

divided military command over military forces in the Japan-Korea area. CINCUNC would retain responsibility for operations in Korea but command of supporting air and naval forces based in Japan would be vested in a commander located in Hawaii.¹⁰⁶

Also, the Army felt that U.S. prestige in the area would be at risk:

Consideration must be given to the singular responsibilities of CINCUNC and the importance, politically and psychologically, as well as militarily, of the continued maintenance of CINCUNC's position and prestige. Division of CINCFE-CINCUNC responsibilities would automatically decrease the position and prestige of CINCUNC since he would no longer be the over-all United States military commander in the area.¹⁰⁷

The majority view focused on two key points in favor of the merging of FECOM and PACOM:

(a) the desirability of eliminating the divided command of the limited U.S. forces available in the general area, and (b) the downward trend in the magnitude of U.S. forces in Japan and Korea.¹⁰⁸

Another major disagreement presented in JCS 1259/348 was centered on the disbandment of CINCNELM. The Army and Air Force were in general agreement that naval forces in the region should operate under EUCOM and/or LANTCOM, while the Navy and the Marine Corps maintained that NELM had a

¹⁰⁶JCS 1259/348, 2062-2063.

¹⁰⁷JCS 1259/348, 2063-2064.

¹⁰⁸JCS 1259/348, 2058.

legitimate mission, especially in light of the (at the time) growing Arab-Israeli conflict. Even then, the Navy and Marine Corps desired only to maintain NELM as a specified command until "the ultimate organization of a Middle East Command is decided upon and activated", at which time NELM would be stood down.¹⁰⁹

The third area of disagreement, which was whether to enlarge or reduce the Caribbean Command, found the services split along predictable lines. According to the Navy and the Marine Corps,

[T]he military and strategic situation does not justify the continuation of a unified command in the Caribbean. The threat to the U.S. and to the Panama Canal and military operations which eventuate therefrom are not expected to require deployment of major U.S. forces in the area. Therefore, it is considered that U.S. interests can be adequately served by assigning CINCLANT responsibility for defending the U.S. against attack through the Caribbean...and by assigning responsibility for the defense of the Panama Canal to the Department of the Army.¹¹⁰

The Army, as the executive agent for CARIBCOM, argued for its expansion to include all of Latin America based on the "increasing political and economic importance of this area to the U.S. and its Allies" while the Air Force preferred to see it remain essentially as before with the land area to

¹⁰⁹JCS 1259/348, 2066.

¹¹⁰JCS 1259/348, 2066-2067.

the south remaining unassigned but with the Caribbean Sea reassigned to CINCLANT.¹¹¹

2. The Final Product: JCS 1259/350

After digesting both the services' and the unified CinCs' feedback to the discussion outlined in JCS 1259/348, the Chairman of the JCS issued a memorandum in April 1956 (JCS 1259/350) in which he put forth his own proposal on the subject. He sought a streamlining of the existing command structure through the reduction of the Unified Commands to four: (1) European, (2) Atlantic, (3) Pacific, and (4) Caribbean. The Caribbean Command would be expanded along the lines proposed by the Army, with the assignment of "bases and sea approaches in the Caribbean" to CINCLANT. The Chairman further maintained that "[A]dvantage should be taken of every opportunity to appoint CINCARIB as the senior U.S. military representative in military and political/military negotiations and dealings between the United States and Central or South American countries". He also argued for the retention of SAC as a specified command

¹¹¹JCS 1259/348, 2106.

and the Continental Air Defense Command as a joint command.¹¹²

The Chairman's proposal was largely acceptable to both the Army and the Air Force, even though they would lose command billets (ALCOM and NECOM) as a result.¹¹³ The Navy, however, had serious misgivings about the plan and the 'service politics' that it implied. Seeing no military necessity for the enlargement (let alone the existence) of the Caribbean Command, one internal Navy memorandum framed the problem in this manner:

In respect to the overall picture, the recommendation of JCS 1259/350 to enlarge CINCARIB (quiet, rear area) and disestablish CINCNELM (a potentially active area) should be considered in context. If it is important to have each military department with two commands, some means other than the enlargement of CINCARIB should be utilized.¹¹⁴

The author of this memorandum went on to recommend that the CNO agree with the disestablishment of FECOM, ALCOM, and NECOM but oppose both the expansion of CARIB and the disestablishment of NELM, in the case of the latter until "satisfactory arrangements are made for continuing the

¹¹²Memorandum by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff for the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Unified Command Plan (hereafter referred to as JCS 1259/350), 6 April 1956, 2119-2120.

¹¹³JCS 1259/350, 2119-2120.

¹¹⁴see Memorandum from the Director, Strategic Plans Division Op-602C1/rla, Ser 0111P60 dated 9 April 1956 (subject JCS 1259/350) 2.

planning and operational tasks now being carried out by CINCNELM".¹¹⁵

Despite the services' objections noted above, the Secretary of Defense accepted the majority of the Chairman's recommendations except in regard to ALCOM, which was reduced in responsibilities but nevertheless retained as a unified command, and CARIBCOM, whose AOR remained restricted to Central America (for the time being).¹¹⁶ NELM managed to retain its status as a specified command with its own AOR, but it was also tasked as the subordinate naval component for CINCEUR.¹¹⁷ A significant change in policy occurred when the Secretary of Defense instructed that, from that point forward, "unless specifically authorized, no unified commander was to exercise direct command of a subordinate force", a move which resulted in the establishment of the separate billet of Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) as the naval component commander under CINCPAC in January 1958.¹¹⁸

In September of 1957, the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) was established, bringing the air defense

¹¹⁵Memorandum, 4.

¹¹⁶History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 22.

¹¹⁷History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 29.

¹¹⁸History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 22-24.

forces of the U.S. and Canada together in one integrated system. The Commander-in-Chief, Continental Air Defense Command (CINCONAD) was then dual-hatted to serve also as CINCNORAD. In 1958, CINCNORAD's designation was switched from a joint command to a unified command.¹¹⁹

Thus, by 1960, the following unified commands were in existence: (1) Pacific, (2) Alaskan, (3) Caribbean, (4) Atlantic, (5) European, and (6) NORAD. In addition, SAC and NELM maintained their status as specified commands, although in NELM's case it was under the objection of the Army and the Air Force, which sought to fold both its forces and its AOR up under the European Command.¹²⁰

3. The Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958

During this period Congress, at the request of President Eisenhower, substantially amended the National Security Act of 1947. The resulting legislation, known as the Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958, greatly altered the operational chain of command between the President and his forces in the field. The Secretary of Defense was now specifically brought into that chain, and the JCS was pushed to the side as "the Secretary's

¹¹⁹History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 24-26.

¹²⁰History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 28.

operational staff".¹²¹ Commanders of both the unified and specified commands now took their orders directly on the authority of the President or the Secretary, and the CINCs "were delegated full 'operational command' over forces assigned to them".¹²² Additionally, the executive ties between the various services and their unified and specified commands were formally severed and replaced by direct JCS executive sponsorship over all. In regard to internal theater organization, "operational command would be exercised through service component commanders or commanders of subordinate commands, if established".¹²³

4. The Origins of the U.S. Strike Command

With an increasing emphasis on conventional, rapid reaction forces brought to the Pentagon by the accession of the Kennedy Administration in 1961, the prevailing view of non-assigned forces began to be transformed. With its CONUS-based "ready" forces having been pooled together in its so-called Strategic Army Corps (STRAC), the Army was further interested in extending this concept to form a standing joint force ready for immediate deployment

¹²¹History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 25.

¹²²History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 25.

¹²³History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 26.

throughout the world.¹²⁴ This goal was adopted by incoming Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara, who in March 1961 "ordered the JCS to develop a plan for integrating STRAC and TAC [the Air Force's Tactical Air Command] into a unified command".¹²⁵

This initiative was supported by both the CJCS and the Chief of Staff, USAF (CSAF), but it met with immediate opposition from the Navy and the Marine Corps, who viewed their forces (even the ones in their home port or base) as being integral to the missions and operations of the Pacific and Atlantic Fleets (and, by extension, the Navy-dominated PACOM and LANTCOM). Both CMC and CNO preferred to settle joint issues through a doctrinal approach or through the formation of a standing Army-Air Force JTF headquarters rather than through a grouping of polyglot operational forces that would (in their eyes) surely interfere with the rightful preserve of CINCPAC and CINCLANT. Overruling the naval service's objections, McNamara ordered the formation of the United States Strike Command (USSTRICOM) as a unified command, but bowing in the direction of compromise, limited its operational control of forces to those of TAC and CONARC. Although it was given responsibilities for the

¹²⁴Weigley, 529.

¹²⁵History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 32.

planning and conduct of contingency operations, USSTRICOM was not allocated a geographic area of responsibility (AOR).¹²⁶

Shortly after its activation on 1 January 1962, a dispute arose over the assignment of an AOR to STRICOM, with the Army and the Air Force, along with the CJCS, arguing for it "to be made responsible for planning and force employment in the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, and Southern Asia (MEAFSA). They phrased the argument as follows:

LANTCOM and NELM are required to execute operations [in MEAFSA] with forces they do not have, using force employment plans developed by other commands, while USSTRICOM, with the organization and resources, is restricted to noncombatant functions and responsibilities.¹²⁷

The Navy and Marine Corps, which saw this area as the logical domain of NELM and LANT (which already had sub-Saharan contingency responsibilities), were opposed to this effort, but McNamara proceeded with the revision and on 30 November 1963 USSTRICOM assumed this AOR. The next day both CINCNELM and JTF-4 (CINLANT's sub-Saharan joint task force headquarters) were disbanded, with the residual naval

¹²⁶History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 32-33.

¹²⁷History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 34 as quoted from (S) JCSM-496-63 to SecDef, 12 Jul 63 (derived from JCS 1259/634-5).

headquarters in London reverting to the role of component commander for EUCOM.¹²⁸

5. The Cuban Missile Crisis and the Unified Command Plan

Although major blows never came to pass over the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962, the operational planning and force deployments necessitated by the crisis went a long way toward simulating the wartime situation that the UCP was supposed to have been designed to support. The Atlantic Command, as the unified command within whose AOR Cuba fell, was to serve as the overall commander of a projected invasion of the island. Contingency planning over the previous year and a half had focused on this course of action, and in support of this planning two service commands, the Army's Continental Army Command (CONARC) and the Air Force's Tactical Air Command (TAC), were instructed to designate major force commanders to support CINCLANT (who had no active Army or Air Force component Commanders at the time) in this endeavor. What resulted was the assignment of CG, XVIII Airborne Corps and Commander, 19th Air Force as interim component commanders for planning purposes.¹²⁹

¹²⁸History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 33-35.

¹²⁹History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 30. The authors report that in July 1961 "the CNO and the CMC recommended to their colleagues [on the JCS] that CINCARLANT and CINCAFLANT be activated. The CSA and CSAF replied that

As the JCS history then describes, with the missile crisis unfolding, on 20 October 1962

CINCLANT designated COMTAC and CG, CONARC as interim Air Force and Army component commanders for contingency planning. (In September, on his own initiative, COMTAC had assumed the duties of CINCAFLANT). Also, CINCLANT changed the invasion plan by naming CG, CONARC, rather than CG, XVIII Airborne Corps, as Commander, Joint Task Force--Cuba.

Forces designated to take part in the invasion were transferred as expected from CINCSTRIKE to the operational control of CINCLANT. However, on the 21st,

CINCLANT promulgated a new command structure. CG, XVIII Airborne Corps was redesignated CJTF--Cuba; he would report directly to CINCLANT. Thus CG, CONARC was effectively excluded from the operational chain of command.¹³⁰

The passages related above seem to suggest that CONARC rightly should have been in the operational chain of command for the projected invasion, but an alternate analysis suggests that the planning and operational responsibility for the invasion should never have been removed from the commanders of the 19th Air Force or the XVIII Airborne Corps in the first place. After all, they had 'worked the problem' for almost a year and a half by October 1962, and, even with the increased allocation of forces, they were much better positioned to execute operational responsibilities

Tactical Air Command (TAC) and Continental Army Command (CONARC) were already giving CINCLANT sufficient support.

¹³⁰History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 31.

than were their respective higher service headquarters. In time, (December 1966) both COMTAC and CG, CONARC were designated as component service commanders for CINCLANT, but not until after a similar scenario was played out in the Dominican Republic in 1965.¹³¹

In the summer of 1963, the Secretary of Defense, after almost a year of discussion with the JCS, approved the change in the title of the Caribbean Command to the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), in order that it might better reflect its Central American focus. The command's AOR still officially excluded South America, but the Kennedy Administration's strong interest in this area pointed to its future southward expansion.¹³²

D. THE VIETNAM WAR PERIOD

The Kennedy Administration also brought to the executive branch a renewed interest in Southeast Asia and an activist approach to counter-insurgency operations. Just a few years after the Eisenhower Administration's refusal to further aid the French cause in Vietnam, emphasis was once again placed on stanching the tide of communism in Thailand, Laos, and South Vietnam through the application of an increasing range

¹³¹History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 31-32.

¹³²History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 36.

of military assistance programs under the control and sponsorship of the Pacific Command.

1. The Establishment and Organization of MACV

The rising commitment of U.S. resources and prestige to the government of South Vietnam led to the establishment of Commander, U.S. Military Advisory Command Vietnam (MACV) in February of 1962. Although designated from its start as a subordinate command of CINCPAC, there was some discussion at that time of the relative merits of its establishment as a separate unified command, but this was opposed by the JCS and CINCPAC

on the grounds that communist pressures throughout Southeast Asia dictated a unified military effort for the area as a whole. They proposed that this could best be accomplished by a subordinate unified command under CINCPAC.¹³³

With this decision instituted, the matter rested until 1964 and 1965, when separate air and naval components were established. Command of the Army component, however, remained as an additional responsibility of COMUSMACV, being that he was a senior Army general.¹³⁴ As the war grew in scope and intensity, a dichotomy developed whereby COMUSMACV exercised operational control over U.S. forces within South Vietnam and its coastal waters (with the exception of 7th

¹³³History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 37.

¹³⁴History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 37-38.

Fleet air and naval gunfire missions in the south) but the conduct of the "strategic" air and naval campaigns against the north were controlled by CINCPAC through his Air Force (PACAF) and Navy (PACFLT) components, with the addition as well of SAC when B-52 missions were instituted.¹³⁵

Within South Vietnam itself, a command structure evolved that reflected the historical Army CinC preference (as in the case of Eisenhower) of serving as the overall combined ground forces commander as well as the theater (or sub-unified theater, as in this case) commander. Thus, by mid-1966, Gen. William Westmoreland, in addition to having an air component (7th Air Force) and a naval component (U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, which was responsible for inshore and inland operations), directly commanded the four principal geographic area commands in South Vietnam (Corps Tactical Zones, or CTZs).¹³⁶

2. The Control of Air Dispute: Round Two

Further complicating the internal command arrangements of MACV was the inclusion of a Marine air-ground formation of corps size - the IIF Marine Amphibious

¹³⁵History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 38-39.

¹³⁶see George S. Eckardt, Vietnam Studies: Command and Control 1950-1969, (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1974) 64-67. The I Corps Tactical Zone was under the command of CG, III MAF, who was also the Marine component commander.

Force (III MAF) - which possessed an organic aircraft wing consisting of both helicopters and jet aircraft, the latter intended primarily for Close Air Support of the Marine divisions in the area. Thus, the pattern that first developed during the Korean War once again emerged whereby the Air Force (in the guise of the 7th Air Force, rather than the 5th, as had been the nemesis in Korea) sought to exert operational control over all fixed-wing sorties in the name of concentration of effort, while the Marines protested that their air units were specifically funded (by Congress), built, and trained to provide effective CAS to their otherwise light (in organic heavy artillery) ground forces.¹³⁷

An additional aspect of the Air Force - Marine struggle may have revolved around the CINCPAC-imposed limitations on MACV's ability to wage war against the foe immediately across the border. One suspects that Westmoreland and his subordinate air commander, frustrated at CINCPAC over their lack of direct control over the air war against the north, may have turned their wrath on the most convenient - and accessible - target: the Marines of III MAF.¹³⁸

¹³⁷Millett, 581-82.

¹³⁸Millett, 586-588.

Once again a compromise solution was worked out that was expedient for the situation at hand but failed to adequately address the question for the future. After following the Korean War pattern of, at first, nearly complete independence of Marine air, there next came a period of nearly complete control by the 7th Air Force. However, by 1970

a revision of MACV's guidance on air operations reaffirmed the air-ground integrity of III MAF and gave the CG Seventh Air Force only the broadest coordinating authority, a change that preserved single management in name but brought actual air operations back to pre-1968 practices.

Thus, in the Marine view

[t]he Air Force kept its pale doctrinal victory, but III MAF received the best close air support ever provided Marines ...¹³⁹

Although time would tell which - if either - of the services had "won" or "lost" this issue, once again a provisional battlefield solution was achieved but the larger doctrinal issue was shelved for another day.

3. The 1970 Blue Ribbon Panel on Defense

Even as the war in Vietnam raged at its peak of intensity, the topic of defense reorganization was again addressed, although this time by an independent Blue Ribbon

¹³⁹Millett, 588.

Defense Panel appointed by President Nixon in 1969.¹⁴⁰ As part of its charter, the panel was asked to report and make recommendations on DoD's "command and control function and facilities", and as such they noted that

[t]he present combatant command structure does not facilitate the solution of many serious problems which materially affect the security of the nation. For example, recent advances in technology require much closer coordination for and employing the forces of the Continental Air Defense Command and the Strategic Air Command than can be reasonably expected with two separate commands.

As for the existing Unified Commands, they

do not bring about unification of the Armed Forces, but rather are layered with Service component headquarters and large headquarters' staffs.¹⁴¹

In regard to the Unified Command Plan, the solutions advocated by the panel included the establishment of three new Unified Commands:

- (1) A Strategic Command, composed of the existing Strategic Air Command, the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff, the Continental Air Defense Command, and Fleet Ballistic Missile Operations;
- (2) A Tactical (or General Purpose) Command, composed of all combatant general purpose forces of the United States assigned to organized combatant units; and
- (3) A Logistics Command, to exercise for all combatant forces supervision of support activities...

¹⁴⁰see Report to the President and the Secretary of Defense on the Department of Defense by the Blue Ribbon Panel, 1 July 1970 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970) hereafter referred to as 1970 Blue Ribbon Panel.

¹⁴¹1970 Blue Ribbon Panel, 1.

in an additional comment, the panel flatly stated that

[n]o Commander of a Unified Command should be permitted to serve concurrently as Chief of his Military Service.¹⁴²

The panel also recommended that

Unified Commanders should be given unfragmented command authority for their Commands, and the Commanders of component commands should be redesignated Deputies to the commander of the appropriate Unified Command...¹⁴³

The last comment seemed to be directed at the unsatisfactory internal command arrangements within MACV, since the report noted that

[t]he capability and effectiveness of combatant forces would be improved by organizing them into a structure with commands that are mission-oriented and with operational command lines that are direct, clear, and unambiguous.¹⁴⁴

In particular, it stated that the command structure should "assure that all combatant forces are truly unified as to perform the command mission", which was likely a criticism directed at what some considered unwieldy aviation command arrangements between the Air Force and the Marines in Vietnam.¹⁴⁵

Perhaps the most radical solution proposed by the panel was the consolidation of then-existing Unified

¹⁴²1970 Blue Ribbon Panel, 4.

¹⁴³1970 Blue Ribbon Panel, 5.

¹⁴⁴1970 Blue Ribbon Panel, 51.

¹⁴⁵1970 Blue Ribbon Panel, 51.

(theater) Commands into functional groupings by:

- (1) Merging the Atlantic Command and the Strike Command;
- (2) Abolishing the Southern Command and reassigning its functions to the merged Atlantic and Strike Commands;
- (3) Abolishing the Alaskan Command and reassigning its general purpose function to the Pacific Command and its strategic functions to the Strategic Command; and
- (4) Restructuring the command channels of the sub-unified commands.¹⁴⁶

In a somewhat unusual proposal, the remaining three area commands (European, Pacific, and the merged Atlantic/Strike/Southern) would be subordinated to an overall Commander, Tactical (or General Purpose) Command.¹⁴⁷ Although no action was initially taken along the lines of the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendations in regard to the UCP, the genesis of future reorganizations can be clearly seen in many of its arguments.

4. The 1970 Packard Review

An internal DoD study on the question of the need for USSOUTHCOM which was commissioned by Deputy Secretary Packard reported back in early 1970 with the view that it was not necessary. Despite the opposition of the JCS, the Deputy Secretary decided to act on the report's

¹⁴⁶1970 Blue Ribbon Panel, 5.

¹⁴⁷1970 Blue Ribbon Panel, 4.

recommendation, but he delayed its presentation to the President pending the results of a JCS review of the UCP. Predictably, the JCS could not present a united front to Packard on the subject, diverging significantly on the structure of a post-SOUTHCOM plan. Service' views on what the remaining commands would look like were as follows:

<u>Army - Air Force</u>	<u>Navy</u>
EUCOM (with Middle East)	EUCOM (with Middle East)
STRICOM (with Latin America)	LANTCOM (with sub-Africa)
PACOM (to remain)	PACOM (with South Asia)
LANTCOM (to specified CinC)	

The CMC "supported the CNO position except to propose that USSTRICOM be redesignated the U.S. Readiness Command (USREDCOM) with unchanged responsibilities".¹⁴⁸

The compromise position worked out between Deputy Secretary Packard and the JCS in March 1971 for the President's consideration contained five major provisions:

- (1) extension of USEUCOM to include 'Mediterranean littoral, the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, and Iran';
- (2) adjustment of the PACOM area to join with USEUCOM east of Iran and with LANTCOM west of South America and east of Africa in such a way that LANTCOM would have responsibility for the waters surrounding South America and Africa;
- (3) retention of ALCOM as a unified command but with area responsibility altered to assign PACOM the Aleutian Islands;

¹⁴⁸History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 42-43.

(4) disestablishment of USSOUTHCOM and USSTRICOM/USCINCMEDIAFSA, with area responsibility for area responsibility for Africa south of the Sahara and Latin America unassigned, except for the Canal Zone, which was assigned to LANTCOM..., and;

(5) establishment of a new unified command, U.S. Readiness Command (USREDCOM) without area responsibility and consisting of CONUS-based forces to reinforce other unified commands.¹⁴⁹

All of the above were directed to be carried out by President Nixon with the exception of the Southern Command; its fate was to be determined in the future after further study. In effect, the issue was soon dropped from active consideration, but was raised again in a 1974 review of the UCP.

5. The 1974 Schlesinger Review

In the 1974 review, the JCS recommended to the Secretary of Defense that Southern Command, Alaskan Command, and the Continental Air Defense Command be disestablished (the latter because it was believed that the USAF Aerospace Defense Command could effectively cover the same mission), although SOUTHCOM residual missions were again caught in a disagreement with the CSA and the CSAF on one side and the CNO and CMC on the other.¹⁵⁰ At the same time, the JCS were

¹⁴⁹History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 43-44.

¹⁵⁰History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 48. Predictably, the Army and Air Force wanted the Canal Zone defense to be REDCOM's responsibility, while the Navy and the Marines argued for the mission to go to LANTCOM.

split over the future of LANTCOM and PACOM, with the Navy and Marines favoring the status quo and the Army and Air Force favoring their redesignation as specified commands. The Army and Air Force argued as well for the re-establishment of a command in Northeast Asia, to be responsible for Japan, Korea, and Okinawa, and a similar one in the Southwest Pacific. The future of REDCOM also was raised, with the naval services and the CJCS now favoring its elimination.¹⁵¹

To summarize, the various positions on the future UCP in 1974 were as follows:

<u>Army-Air Force</u>	<u>CJCS</u>	<u>Navy-Marine Corps</u>
Unified:	Unified:	Unified:
Europe	Europe	Europe
Northeast Asia	Atlantic	Atlantic
Southwest Pacific	Pacific	Pacific
Western Pacific		
Eastern Asia		
Readiness		
Specified:	Specified:	Specified:
SAC	SAC	SAC
AirDefCom	AirDefCom	AirDefCom
Atlantic Fleet		
Pacific Fleet		

¹⁵¹History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 48-49.

Judging from the voting pattern, it should come as no great surprise that the CJCS during this period was an admiral.¹⁵²

What Secretary of Defense Schlesinger thought of the extreme polarization of views forwarded to him on the subject one can but speculate, however he forwarded a recommendation to the President in late 1974 conforming largely to the views of the Chairman and the naval services. He proposed that EUCOM, PACOM, LANTCOM, REDCOM, and SAC remain essentially as they were. In a nod toward the Army and Air Force position, Schlesinger directed that "[c]ontingency plans were to be prepared for activation of a Northeast Asia Command, a Southwest Pacific Command, and other regional commands and task forces as necessary", although in the end none of these were established during his tenure. Once again the Southern Command was to be disestablished by JCS consensus, only for this action to be postponed "pending the resolution of the Panama Canal negotiations".¹⁵³ Schlesinger's proposals for the reorganization of the UCP (less SOUTHCOM, of course) were

¹⁵²CJCS was Admiral Thomas H. Moorer from 2 July 1970 to 1 July 1974. See William J. Webb and Ronald H. Cole, The Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Washington, D.C.: Historical Division, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1989) 81.

¹⁵³History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 50-51.

approved by the President on 21 April 1975 and went into effect on 1 July of that year.¹⁵⁴

Two other changes of significance to the UCP were instituted during this period. The first dealt with the designation of the Military Airlift Command (MAC) as a specified command. Although the CSAF (with the support of the other service chiefs) sought to block this move on the grounds that MAC would better support the unified commands from its current position of subordination to the Secretary of the Air Force, he was overruled by the Deputy Secretary at the behest of the CJCS. Thus, on 1 February 1977 CINCMAC became

the commander of a specified command comprising all forces assigned for the accomplishment of his military airlift missions during wartime, periods of crisis, JCS exercises, and as necessary to insure the operational support to other unified and specified commands.¹⁵⁵

The second major change to the UCP was the initiation in early 1976 of a theater boundary redrawing between LANTCOM and PACOM off of East Africa. Prior to the redraw, the entire ocean area surrounding sub-Saharan Africa had been the responsibility of LANTCOM, but a JCS discussion concerning the advisability of altering EUCOM's Middle East mandate (initiated by the CSA, who wanted that AOR for

¹⁵⁴History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 51-52.

¹⁵⁵History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 56.

REDCOM) ended up resulting in the shift of the entire Indian Ocean and the waters off the east coast of Africa to PACOM in order to "simplify command arrangements".¹⁵⁶

6. The Origins of the U.S. Central Command

By the late 1970s, American strategic planners came to focus increasing attention on the Middle Eastern area and, in particular, the vital oil-producing states bordering the Arabian Gulf. The Iranian revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan served to buttress the argument for establishing a separate unified command to deal exclusively with this volatile area, but once again the JCS were initially unable to come up with a satisfactory realignment of AORs to make room for a new command.

Predictably, the services split along traditional lines, with the Army and Air Force desiring the Middle East AOR (or Southwest Asia, as it was increasingly referred to) to be converted to a sub-unified command under EUCOM, while the Navy and Marine Corps pushed for its establishment as a sub-unified command under PACOM.¹⁵⁷ As an interim solution, a Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) was formed - originally under REDCOM - to plan for and execute any major contingency operation in the area of Southwest Asia.

¹⁵⁶History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1977, 54-55.

¹⁵⁷Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 321.

Rejecting the various services' positions, the Secretary of Defense in 1983 stood up a separate unified command, the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM), with an AOR of Southwest Asia and the Horn of Africa.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 293.

IV. THE GOLDWATER-NICHOLS ACT AND UNITY OF COMMAND

A. THE PERCEPTION OF THE PROBLEM

The at times bitter disengagement of the U.S. from the Vietnam War, with its final act consisting of the costly retaking of the *Mayaguez* as part of the 1975 evacuation of Phnom Penn and Saigon, provoked a flurry of analyses which attempted to explain the causes of the American military failure in this region. The apologies and explanations for this defeat of American arms ranged from the cultural and sociological limitations of the individual U.S. combat soldier up through the failure of U.S. Presidents and strategists to view the world without ideological blinders.

The continuation of this string of military failures along with the occasional sloppy "victory" throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s served to focus the critical attention in part on the supposedly awkward and divided theater command arrangements that had been fashioned over time out of undue concern for parochial service interests. Three events in particular gave rise to this school of analysis: the 1980 failed hostage rescue attempt in Iran (Desert One), the 1983 bombing of the Marine battalion headquarters building in Lebanon, and the successful but problem-filled invasion of Grenada, also in 1983. Problems

in each operation seemed to result from a failure in some aspect of joint command, primarily due either to the apportioning of missions as if they were equal slices of a pie, an unwieldy chain of command, or a refusal on the part of various service components to cooperate laterally within that chain.

1. The 1980 Iranian Hostage Rescue Attempt

The failed rescue attempt of American hostages in Iran (Desert One) in April 1980 pointed to some serious deficiencies in the training, organization, and interoperability of U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOFs). In particular, critics detected in the ad hoc composition of the strike forces utilized for the operation an attempt to give every service a "slice of the pie". As a consequence, unity of command and the assignment of appropriately-skilled personnel to the mission - and thus its chances for success - were perceived to have been sacrificed in order to satisfy parochial service considerations.¹⁵⁹

The lessons drawn from the experience of this debacle, in addition to a growing realization that the services could not be trusted to adequately fund and support SOFs, included the need for a greater, focused emphasis on joint operations and a clearer delineation of both the

¹⁵⁹Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 361-62.

authority and the responsibility for military operations from the President down to the tactical units in the field. However, it was to take several more years and two more problem-filled and tragic military operations before the resurgence of interest in the area of unity of command extended to a reform-minded Congress.

2. The Beirut Bombing

The truck-bombing of the Marine Battalion Landing Team (BLT) headquarters building in Beirut, Lebanon on 23 October 1983, in addition to being the costliest single attack on U.S. military forces in over a decade, represented a tremendous defeat for American diplomacy in the Middle East. The post-mortems of this event once again revealed a failure to conduct a unified effort in Lebanon both between the Departments of State and Defense and within the Defense Department itself.

Relating to the lack of a unified military effort, the mission of the Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) that was the U.S. component of the Multi-National Force (MNF) was kept separate from the activities of the U.S. military advisory group, whose mission was to train the Christian-dominated Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) in an attempt to strengthen the authority of the Lebanese Government. That the former was supposed to be engaged in neutral peacekeeping while the

latter was engaged - at least in the view of the Muslim and Druze factions - in actively aiding and abetting the Lebanese Christian attempt to re-impose order and control was not viewed as an inherently contradictory and even ludicrous set of missions - at least until the late summer of 1983. By then this arguably faint distinction was made irrelevant by the heavy use of American naval gunfire in support of the LAF's battles for the Shouf Mountains south of Beirut in mid-September 1983, an event that helped set the stage for the tragedy of 23 October.¹⁶⁰

Criticism was also focused on the overly-bureaucratic chain of command in effect at the time of the bombing:

...the many layers of military headquarters separating the Secretary of Defense (and the JCS, as his executive agent) from the one small MAU in Beirut also aggravated the coordination problem. All orders had to be transmitted through this very elongated chain-of-command, and it is unquestionably the case that both nuance and conceptual clarity were lost in the process. Finally, Washington actors refused either to delegate authority (e.g. authority to employ naval gunfire) to the MAU Commander or to take responsibility for direct operational control of the USMNF.¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰For more information concerning the events that led up to the bombing of the BLT headquarters, see Benis M. Frank, U.S. Marines in Lebanon 1982-1984, (Washington, D.C.: History and Museums Division, Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, 1987) 70-105.

¹⁶¹Ralph A. Hallenbeck, Military Force as an Instrument of U.S. Foreign Policy: Intervention in Lebanon, August 1982-February 1984 (New York: Praeger, 1991) 150.

The inability, unwillingness, or simple lack of consideration on the part of the Secretary of Defense or the JCS to shorten the chain of command made it extremely difficult for the Marines on the ground to adapt to the rapidly changing conditions. This is in stark contrast to the activities of U.S. Special Envoy (and soon to be the U.S. National Security Advisor) Robert McFarlane, who was able to communicate freely with his superiors in the White House on a regular basis.¹⁶²

3. The Invasion of Grenada

The invasion of Grenada, which was undertaken and completed within a few days of the Beirut bombing, nevertheless also became the target of extensive criticism both from within Congress and without. Although the operation was a success, various problems encountered during its course seemed to suggest that once again the services were either unwilling or unable to subordinate selfish interests for the sake of an effective joint effort.

Specific concerns included the division of the island into Army and Marine AORs, the inability of the various forces to communicate effectively across service lines, and the failure on the part of the JTF commander to appoint a common ground forces commander. Several cases of

¹⁶²Hallenbeck, 72-75.

friendly-fire casualties were blamed in part on the problems named above, as well as the deaths of a number of Grenadan civilian non-combatants.

As was the case with the Iranian hostage rescue attempt, the forces assigned to carry out the operation seemed to have been apportioned out to the services based as much on political considerations as on operational ones. The Marine Corps argued that the operation could have been handled more effectively as an exclusively naval operation, while the Army found fault with the JTF Commander's decision not to appoint an overall ground forces commander on the island.¹⁶³ To many in Congress, this dispute simply reinforced their notion that none of the services were really serious about joint military operations. In combination with the Beirut and Iranian fiascos, this experience fueled the fire of reformers who sought to strengthen the ability of unified commanders to overcome service resistance to joint warfare.

B. THE GOLDWATER-NICHOLS ACT

1. The SASC Review of Defense Organization

In January 1985, a special study was initiated at the direction of Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman

¹⁶³Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 363-370.

Barry Goldwater (R-Az) and its ranking minority member Sam Nunn (D-Ga) to study the "organization and decision-making procedures of the Department of Defense".¹⁶⁴ This landmark study, released on 16 October 1985 under the title *Defense Organization: The Need for Change*, served as the framework within which the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 was crafted, debated, and eventually incorporated into law.

In the report's review of the Unified and Specified Commands, the six main problem areas identified were:

- (1) a confused chain of command from the Commander in Chief to the operational commanders;
- (2) The weak authority of Unified Commanders over Service component commands;
- (3) the imbalance between the responsibilities and accountability of the Unified Commanders and their influence over resource decisions;
- (4) the absence of unification below the level of the Unified Commander and his staff;
- (5) the absence of an objective review of the Unified Command Plan; and
- (6) Unnecessary micro-management of tactical operations and circumvention of the chain of command during crises.¹⁶⁵

In regard to the absence of unification below the theater level, the study quoted President Eisenhower's rationale for the 1958 reorganization:

¹⁶⁴Defense Organization: The Need for Change, III.

¹⁶⁵Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 302-322.

If ever again we should be involved in a war, we will fight it in all elements, with all services, as one single concentrated effort.

In particular, it emphasized Eisenhower's view that

[p]eacetime preparatory and organizational activity must conform to this fact.¹⁶⁶

With that in mind, the report went on to cite examples, both before and after unity of command was agreed upon in principle during World War II, in support of its argument for greater unification within a theater of military operations. It noted that

[w]hile unified commands may be organized to conduct theater campaigns similar to those of World War II, it is evident that they are not organized to respond to lesser threats like the *Pueblo* seizure or the *Mayaguez* incident.¹⁶⁷

Also, the case of the Vietnam War was raised, where "a complex and fragmented structure was created to control U.S. forces in and around Vietnam". The report's authors pronounced that "service considerations played the major role in the formulation of this ineffective command arrangement".¹⁶⁸

The analysis of the lack of an objective review process for the UCP was revealing:

¹⁶⁶Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 312.

¹⁶⁷Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 314.

¹⁶⁸Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 316.

The current operational command arrangement is essentially an evolutionary one, building on the base that existed at the end of World War II. As U.S. worldwide national security interests have waxed and waned, old commands have been eliminated and new commands created.

It went on to note that

[i]f one were to ignore the current Unified Command Plan and start from scratch to design a new plan, it might well differ significantly from the one that exists today. *Clearly, today's worldwide strategic environment is drastically different from the one that existed at the end of World War II* (emphasis mine).¹⁶⁹

Considering that this report was written in 1985, the above statement is particularly appropriate for the strategic situation of mid- and late 1990s, given the sweeping changes on the international scene in the last decade.

Close on the heels of *Defense Organization*, President Reagan assembled a Blue Ribbon Commission under former Deputy Defense Secretary David Packard to also study and look for ways to improve defense management. Included among its findings, which were published in June 1986, were recommendations that:

(1) subject to the review and approval of the Secretary of Defense, Unified Commanders should be given broader authority to structure subordinate commands, joint task forces, and support activities in such a way that best supports their missions and results in a significant reduction in the size and numbers of military headquarters;

(2) The Unified Command Plan should be revised to assure increased flexibility to deal with situations that overlap

¹⁶⁹Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 320.

the geographic boundaries of the current combatant commands and with changing world conditions.

(3) For contingencies short of general war, the Secretary of Defense, with the advice of the Chairman and the JCS, should have the flexibility to establish the shortest possible chains of command for each force deployed, consistent with proper supervision and support. This would help the CINCs and the JCS perform better in situations ranging from peace to crisis to general war.¹⁷⁰

Additionally, the report advocated the establishment of a "single unified command to integrate global air, land, and sea transportation...". This last measure was instituted on 1 October 1987 with the stand-up of the U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois.¹⁷¹

2. The Impact of Goldwater-Nichols

As to the effect of *Defense Organization: The Need for Change* on the structure of the UCP, it amounted to relatively little, which is not surprising given its comparatively modest recommendations in this particular area. It undoubtedly helped further the cause of "jointness" by the incorporation (in the Goldwater-Nichols

¹⁷⁰A Quest for Excellence: Final Report to the President by the President's Blue Ribbon Commission on Defense Management David Packard, Chairman, June 1986, Washington, D.C., 38.

¹⁷¹see Glenn W. Goodman, Jr. and Benjamin F. Schemmer, "An exclusive AFJ interview with: General Duane H. Cassidy, USAF," Armed Forces Journal International January 1988, 49-54.

Act) of many of its recommendations designed to shift greater command authority to the CINCs and away from the Services, but no wholesale review and reorganization of the Unified Commands with geographic AORs along the lines suggested (but not recommended) by the report was instituted.¹⁷²

The biggest change to the UCP structure resulting from the 1986 legislation was the creation of several unified "type" or "forces" commands out of various service or Specified Commands. In addition to TRANSCOM, two other unified commands were brought into being within several years of the passage of Goldwater-Nichols. One result of the heightened Congressional interest in the wake of the failed hostage rescue attempt in Iran was an effort on its part to find a way to better integrate the various special operations forces in the U.S. military. An additional concern was the relatively low priority given special operations forces by their respective service headquarters, in particular during times of declining defense budgets.

The solution adopted to address both of these problems was to institute a joint command structure which

¹⁷²see Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 351-353, for the recommendations concerning the organization of Unified and Specified Commands and the proper roles of the Defense Secretary and the JCS Chairman.

incorporated and separately funded all of the U.S. special operations forces. It was anticipated that, in addition to greatly improved coordination and interoperability, the creation of such a command under a four-star general would also give these forces the kind of high visibility and strong advocate necessary for their bureaucratic survival.¹⁷³ The U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) was established at MacDill AFB in Tampa, Florida in 1987, taking over the headquarters and facilities of the disestablished U.S. Readiness Command.¹⁷⁴

A similar event had occurred in 1984, when the Reagan Administration decided to consolidate the various services' space operations headquarters and facilities under a unified command. While none of the services had starved their space operations activities, the Administration felt that a closer integration and rationalization of the various service space programs was nonetheless necessary. The end result was the U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM), which was established on 23 September 1985.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³for a detailed discussion of the background to this consolidation, see Michael Ganley, "Congress Creates New Unified Command for SOF and New Civilian SOF Chief," Armed Forces Journal International November 1986, 20-22.

¹⁷⁴"New Special Ops Command Established," Armed Forces Journal International May 1987, 12.

¹⁷⁵Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 275.

C. GOLDWATER-NICHOLS: AN ASSESSMENT

1. Cushman: A Job Half Finished

Even with the passage of Goldwater-Nichols, criticisms of the Unified Command Plan continued to be brought forward from various groups outside the Pentagon. Lt. General John H. Cushman, USA (Ret.) in 1990 authored a penetrating analysis of the post-Goldwater-Nichols flaws of the UCP.¹⁷⁶ While lauding the framers' efforts to "ensure that the authority of the unified and specified combat commands is fully commensurate with the responsibility of those commanders...", General Cushman maintained that

[m]erely having authority to match responsibility is not sufficient, however. *Capacity, the means to accomplish missions assigned, is also needed. Without adequate resources or command and control a commander in chief, no matter how extensive the "authority", will not be able to accomplish the mission effectively.*¹⁷⁷ [emphasis mine]

In particular, Cushman detected a huge disconnect between, on the one hand, the authority and responsibility of the unified area CINCs (European, Southern, Atlantic, Pacific, and Central) and, on the other, their capacity to execute

¹⁷⁶see LtGen. John H. Cushman, USA (Ret.) "The Planning, Command, and Conduct of Military Operations: An Assessment of DoD Performance, 1986-1988," in Making Defense Reform Work (James A. Blackwell Jr. and Barry M. Blechman, Editors) (Washington: Brassey's (US), 1990) pps. 105-119. Hereafter referred to as Cushman, Planning.

¹⁷⁷Cushman, Planning, 107.

their assigned missions with dispatch. He foresaw in the failure of the Secretary of Defense to execute a Goldwater-Nichols' directive to perform a comprehensive review of the area unified commands' the actual consequence that "some CINC's authority and capacity for mission preparedness grossly undermatch their responsibility and accountability".¹⁷⁸

Cushman used several examples to illustrate his point. In the first, he examined the case of CENTCOM in the late 1980s, where he saw that adequate forces were under the direct command of the CINC to perform the tanker escort and general presence missions required of him at the time. However, in considering the worst-case scenario, which was at the time a massive Soviet offensive aimed at the seizure of the region's oil fields, the CINC was utterly dependent on forces that would be seconded to him by other CINCs such as CINCLANT, CINCPAC, and CINCFOR. This patched-together force would, in his opinion, have "no time for on the job training" but nevertheless "must perform superbly from its first introduction into combat". Thus, "if it is to succeed, it must be well organized, led, trained, and conditioned".¹⁷⁹ General Cushman argued that the present

¹⁷⁸Cushman, Planning, 111.

¹⁷⁹Cushman, Planning, 112.

system does not allow for the development of the kind of teamwork between the CINC and his warfighting subordinates that is critical to success in combat.

General Cushman's prescription was that, in order

[t]o ensure a success-oriented, rather than failure-prone state of readiness, they [the CINCs] need, at a minimum, some day-to-day "authority, direction, and control" of a sizeable all-service joint task force, which they could then train and otherwise prepare for employment in the variety of possible conditions under which they might be required to fight.¹⁸⁰

Cushman's other examples called attention to the fact that some forces that are operating within a geographic CINC's AOR are many times kept out of his chain of command. He first cited the example of the U.S.S. *Okinawa*, an amphibious assault ship that, even with tensions running high in Panama in April 1988, was left under the command of CINCLANT during its transit through the Canal Zone. He viewed such a situation as an accident waiting to happen, arguing that one could reasonably foresee a circumstance whereby CINCSOUTH could have needed to quickly call upon the *Okinawa* and its embarked Marines to support a developing contingency operation within his AOR. Similarly divided command

¹⁸⁰Cushman, Planning, 112.

arrangements might surely have hampered the successful execution of such an operation.¹⁸¹

Along this vein, Gen. Cushman examined the problem of Marine forces operating ashore or in close proximity to South Korea during major exercises, yet remaining under the command of the Commander, 7th Fleet, which is normally headquartered in Japan. He posited that, like the situation in Panama, such divided command arrangements in a particularly tense region of the world invite trouble should the situation turn sour. In the above-mentioned cases of both Panama and Korea, General Cushman argued persuasively that these divided command arrangements, while they may have been within the letter of Goldwater-Nichols, were certainly not within the spirit or the intent of the law's framers.¹⁸²

As is the case with many UCP issues, some of Gen. Cushman's complaints centered on joint command arrangements that had their roots in a Cold War warfighting strategy that dictated a 'Europe first' prioritization of effort. Thus, neither CENTCOM, SOUTHCOM, or even UNC Korea rated significant dedicated forces when the decisive theater of

¹⁸¹Cushman, Planning, 117. This situation may have been personally galling to Gen. Cushman, who served as the Combined Forces Commander in South Korea, and thus had to put up with this type of arrangement.

¹⁸²Cushman, Planning, 117.

war was expected to be in Europe and the North Atlantic. As such, the forces that these CINCs received for in-theater training and exercises were not necessarily the ones that they would see if a major contingency were to arise. Nonetheless, other contingencies in the late 1980s - such as the "Tanker War" in the Persian Gulf - did involve instances where major combat forces in the immediate area remained under the control of supporting CINCs rather than being "chopped" to the supported CINC.

2. Panama: The First Test

The December 1989 U.S. intervention in Panama, which was one of the largest American military operations since the end of the Vietnam War and "the largest military night operation since World War II", provided a glimpse of how the Goldwater-Nichols Act was to be translated into joint operations in the future.¹⁸³ Primarily an Army and Special Operations show, JUST CAUSE was nevertheless unique in several important ways.

Perhaps taking heed of the earlier criticism regarding the U.S.S. *Okinawa's* transit of the Panama Canal, U.S. naval units operating in proximity to the AOR were chopped to SOUTHCOM in order to provide relatively minor

¹⁸³Robert R. Ropelewski, "Planning, Precision, and Surprise Led to Panama Successes," Armed Forces Journal International February 1990, 26-32.

support for the operation. A reinforced company task force of Marine light armor and infantry participated as well, although its missions were kept separate for the most part from the major brigade-sized Army operations throughout the country. All in all, the operation did not measurably contribute to an expanded interpretation of 'jointness', although on the down side there was significant criticism within the Army concerning the decision to involve so many CONUS-based units (including the JTF Headquarters) rather than relying on the Panama-based units and their headquarters to conduct the operation.¹⁸⁴

3. The War in the Persian Gulf: 1990-1991

When the U.S. deployed forces to the Middle East in 1990 in response to the 2 August Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, it did so under the overall command of General Norman Schwarzkopf, who was then serving as the Commander in Chief, U.S. Central Command (USCINCCENT). As described earlier in this section, prior to August 1990 there were relatively small forces operating under Schwarzkopf's immediate command. They consisted primarily of the Joint Task Force Middle East (JTFME), which was at the time composed of a squadron of small surface combatants and support ships

¹⁸⁴Tacticus, "Few Lessons Were Learned in Panama Invasion," Armed Forces Journal International June 1993, 54.

augmented on occasion by larger naval units, as well as specialized Army and Air Force detachments. This Task Force Commander also served as the on-scene representative for Naval Component Commander for CENTCOM, while its Army and Air Force Components were based in CONUS and dual-hatted as the commanders or deputy commanders of other service formations.¹⁸⁵

The major formations that were rushed to the Gulf in August and September of 1990 included the 7th Fleet (with several aircraft carrier battle groups as well as an afloat Marine Expeditionary Brigade), the XVIII Airborne Corps (with an airborne, an air assault, and two mechanized divisions), the 9th Air Force (with multiple fighter, bomber, and tanker wings), and the I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) (with a division, an aircraft wing, and a force service support group).¹⁸⁶

As a result of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, Gen. Schwarzkopf had (arguably) a great deal more latitude to

¹⁸⁵CENTCOM's Army component (ARCENT) was headed by LtGen John Yeosock, who commanded the Third Army and also held the billet of Deputy Commander, FORSCOM. The Air Force Component (CENTAF) was headed by LtGen. Charles Horner, who as CG, Ninth Air Force was in peacetime a subordinate of the Tactical Air Command. See John H. Cushman, "Desert Storm's End Game," Naval Institute Proceedings October 1993, 76-80.

¹⁸⁶Norman Friedman, Desert Victory: The War for Kuwait (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1991) 75.

internally organize his combat forces as he saw fit than did his predecessors.¹⁸⁷ In the early months of Desert Shield, where the focus was primarily on the rapid build-up of the minimum essential force for an adequate defense of Saudi Arabia, internal command arrangements were (apparently) not an issue. The Marines, spreading out to the north from their initial base at the port of Jubayl as the arrival of successive pre-positioned Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEBs) permitted, formed an enclave reminiscent in some ways of that around Da Nang, South Vietnam almost 30 years before. The Army, on the other hand, built up from its base in and around the Dahrhan airfield complex to the south through which the lead elements of XVIII Airborne Corps had arrived in Saudi Arabia. Thus, in many ways the constraints imposed by 'expeditionary' logistics tended to support separate Army and Marine commands in the early phase of the deployment.

President Bush's 8 November 1990 announcement of the further massive deployment of forces - including a four-division "heavy" corps, as well as a second Marine division and a second afloat MEB - to the theater created an entirely new operational situation on the ground. With the projected movement of all of these new forces northward toward the

¹⁸⁷see Cushman, "Desert Storm's End Game," 76-77.

Kuwaiti border, Schwarzkopf was left with an array of options concerning the mixing and matching of Army and Marine ground formations.

In a stinging article in the October 1993 *Naval Institute Proceedings*, Gen. John Cushman analyzed Schwarzkopf's decisions regarding CENTCOM's land forces organization during DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM in light of the argument that the operation was less than a complete success because of its failure to destroy the Iraqi Republican Guard.¹⁸⁸ He discerned that the failure to do so may have been in large part due to the CinC's lack of a good sense of what was happening on the battlefield. Specifically, he cited German operational doctrine, which

uses the term *fingerspitzengefuehl* (fingertip touch) to capture a commander's masterful hands-on sensing of the moving tactical situation on the battlefield, together with the situation's risks and opportunities.¹⁸⁹

According to General Cushman,

For the ground war of Desert Storm, General Schwarzkopf did not have fingertip touch; he had not created a command and control scheme that would allow it. Lacking this essential fingertip touch in the war's final hours, he evidently did not grasp - and he surely failed to seize, the opportunity to trap all of Iraq's forces south of the Euphrates.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸Cushman, "Desert Storm's End Game," 76-80.

¹⁸⁹Cushman, "Desert Storm's End Game," 76.

¹⁹⁰Cushman, "Desert Storm's End Game," 76.

General Cushman observed that Schwarzkopf had essentially three options in terms of the command of the three U.S. corps-sized formations that comprised his land forces:

(1) He could create a separate land forces commander.

(2) He could double-hat himself as land forces commander, directly commanding ArCent/Third Army and MarCent/I MEF, both of which would have operational and logistic responsibilities. (ArCent, commanding the 22nd Support Command, also would have a theater logistic responsibility.)

(3) He could take direct operational control of the Army corps - orders for operations would come directly from and corps battle reports would flow directly to Schwarzkopf's command center. Yeosock would assist Schwarzkopf in planning; he would stay entirely current on plans and operations; he would with all his assets support the corps, but he would not decide on or direct the corps' operations.¹⁹¹

Cushman argued that

[i]n August 1990, with a one-corps Third Army, General Schwarzkopf chose the second option. When it later became clear that he would have a two-corps Third Army, he stayed with that choice, bringing in a three-star Deputy CinCCent, Lieutenant General Calvin A. H. Waller, to relieve himself of some of the details of land force direction and air/land coordination.¹⁹²

Thus, I MEF, a two-division (with a U.S. Army armor brigade reinforcing) corps-equivalent which also included a heavily-reinforced Marine Aircraft Wing of over 500 aircraft

¹⁹¹Cushman, "Desert Storm's End Game," 78.

¹⁹²Cushman, "Desert Storm's End Game," 78.

(including more than 200 fixed-wing jets) was organized as a separate operational maneuver element from the U.S. Third Army, which by D-Day included nine U.S. divisions organized into two corps.¹⁹³

General Cushman conceded that there were powerful factors that supported such a decision:

[t]he CINC was doing high policy and theater strategy; he was in daily touch with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; he needed to work personally with the Saudis, British, French, Navy, Marines, and all the rest; he had the key role dealing with the media, he had to supervise the air war's planning and execution. He could reasonably have said that there were not enough hours in the day for him to take on this part of General Yeosock's established duties.

Cushman continued that Schwarzkopf

could also say that, in principle, the CinC is not a war fighter; that strategic, not operational, direction is his role; that he surveys the scene, allocates forces, and provides mission guidance. [emphasis mine]

Further,

he could claim that directing the operations of the corps of his Army component was not his business but rather the job of his Army component commander, who had the resources and the expertise for that task (even though that would place another command center, located in Riyadh not far from his own - itself 300 miles from the fight - in the chain between the CinC and his frontline Army commanders, inevitably delaying and possibly garbling battle reports and orders).¹⁹⁴

Cushman concluded that Schwarzkopf's decision to allow the ArCent/Third Army headquarters to serve as an

¹⁹³Freidman, 304-5.

¹⁹⁴Cushman, "Desert Storm's End Game," 78.

operational command was inevitably destined to create, rather than solve, command and control problems once the ground phase of the campaign kicked off. Cushman stated that

in mid-February - when it was clear that the war's end might come quickly upon launching the ground attack - it became essential that Schwarzkopf himself direct the two corps [of the Third Army]. By then he had the free time to do it, and he had the "trusted" General Waller, who "had come up through the Army as an armor officer." From a forward command post, Waller, as Deputy CinC, could help Schwarzkopf exercise fingertip touch. Yeosock could support by, for example, providing staff expertise for a land operations cell in Schwarzkopf's command center.¹⁹⁵

The results of the air campaign of DESERT STORM, while perhaps less contentious than the outcome of the ground campaign, are nevertheless also still the subject of some debate. Schwarzkopf, in accordance with the latitude permitted to him under Goldwater-Nichols, appointed CENTAF/CG 9th Air Force Commander Charles Horner as the Joint Forces Air Component Commander (JFACC), with responsibilities and authority "for 'planning, coordination, and tasking' of all the air in the force, regardless of its service".¹⁹⁶ For the first time in practice, this authority

¹⁹⁵Cushman, "Desert Storm's End Game," 78-79.

¹⁹⁶Cushman, "Desert Storm's End Game," 76.

would include the tasking of aircraft carrier-based naval aviation as well as sea-launched cruise missiles.¹⁹⁷

Despite problems communicating the massive air tasking order (ATO) to all the relevant air units throughout the theater, the JFACC system on the surface appeared to work in a satisfactory manner. One could make the argument that DESERT STORM did not really 'stress' the system, and thus the verdict in many ways is still out. In response to Navy criticisms, the Air Force in the last several years has modified the computer-assisted force management system (CAFMS) used during DESERT STORM, but the overall JFACC system will again be utilized in the next conflict.

One of the traditional problems that seemed to be avoided in Southwest Asia was the Air Force-Marine battle over the control of Close Air Support (CAS) assets, but this probably was due more to the fact that there was no shortage of available aircraft (with almost a thousand CAS-capable tactical aircraft ashore and six carriers and two LHAs worth of aircraft afloat) to support both Army and Marine requirements with plenty to spare. In fact, it appears that, at least in the Marine case, the biggest aviation problem was the lack of adequate ramp space to park the hundreds of tactical and transport aircraft in theater.

¹⁹⁷Cushman, "Desert Storm's End Game," 77.

If it had not been for the extraordinary military aviation infrastructure already in place throughout the Arabian Peninsula, the battle over the control of Marine and Navy strike and multi-mission aircraft such as the A-6 and the F/A-18 would likely have been intense. The Marines quite predictably would have argued that the strategic bombing and air interdiction campaigns must not be prosecuted completely at the expense of effective CAS for the ground war, while the Air Force would have maintained that 'strategic' targets deserved the higher priority in the larger scheme of things. The Navy, wanting to 'play' in the big air war, yet at the same time not wanting to publicly undercut the Marines, would in the end likely have straddled the issue.

4. Implications for the Future

The American military experience since the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act seems to suggest that 'unity of command' is still evolving as a concept. Even within established unified theaters, actions by the theater CinCs in both JUST CAUSE and DESERT SHIELD/STORM indicate that dividing up an AOR along service lines is still the preferred method of operation, and that tremendous pressure still exists for CinCs to command through service - vice functional - component commanders.

Despite Goldwater-Nichols, not one of the theater boundaries of the geographic unified commands established before 1986 has been altered, even though both the strategic rationale and the service prerogatives present at their creation have been utterly transformed by events of the last few years. Even the Southern Command, which several times has been spared extinction despite the repeated (and extraordinarily rare, at least when it comes to UCP issues) consensus of the JCS to the contrary, appears to be in a position to survive as a unified command - this despite the withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Panama scheduled for the end of this decade.

Perhaps the fundamental problem is that the individual services still create, train, and develop doctrine for their operational forces relatively independent of centralized control and without a common doctrinal approach. By extension, they also plan for their employment in a single-service manner, with the minimum possible contact with the other services below the component headquarters. Thus, the Army pushes its five-division rapid deployment corps, the Air Force promotes its new composite wings and argues that a force consisting of X number of B-2s might have single-handedly (by implication) been able to halt the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and the Marine Corps

nervously looks over its shoulders at the first two, maintaining that it is already the nation's "9-1-1" rapid deployment outfit and has operated "composite" wings for years. Only the Navy, reeling from the Tailhook '91 scandal, the cancellation of the A-12 program, and the loss of its only credible open-ocean foe with the collapse of the USSR, has publicly admitted in its "From the Sea..." white paper to a future that consists of playing a mostly supporting (or enabling, in the Navy parlance), rather than central, role in likely near to mid-term conflicts.

The situation that I have described above suggests that the 'cart' - namely the interest of the individual services - is still very much out in front of the 'horse' of joint warfare all the way from the size and number of unified commands down through the heavy/light mix of surviving Army and National Guard divisions and Air Force wings. Thus, the very actions that most of the services are taking in order to 'hunker down' and survive the post-Cold War demobilization are contributing to undercutting of 'jointness' in a way similar to the post-World War II process. Specialized or 'limited' mission aircraft and ships - such as battleships, which are very expensive (for the Navy) to keep in service but bring irreplaceable combat capabilities to joint operations - are being sacrificed in favor of more modern multi-mission platforms. While perhaps

making sense from a single-service perspective, the loss of these marginal but unique capabilities will be deeply felt in the next major regional contingency.

The fundamental problem can be boiled down to the issue of success from the outset in wartime. General Gordon Sullivan, the current Army Chief of Staff, states the case for preserving the Army's readiness in terms of the phrase "no more Task Force Smiths", which refers to the utter defeat of a woefully unprepared battalion-sized Task Force thrown in the path of the rapidly advancing North Korean Peoples Army in July of 1950. That cautionary tale needs to be rephrased and extended to include the entire American military's - not just the Army's - experience at the outset of the Korean War. Since the U.S. military may in a few short years be in a similar state of poor combat readiness due to incessant budget cutting and the growing distraction of 'non-traditional' missions, it is vital that those forces that can be rushed overseas on precious airlift and sealift assets can be quickly and effectively employed as the CinC sees fit in a joint war fighting environment without undue concern for service parochialism.

To overcome inter-service problems and ensure success at the outset of hostilities requires a complete restructuring that starts from the top - the structure of the Unified Command Plan - and builds down with a conscious

goal of meeting the operational needs of the CinC and limiting (or eliminating) the deleterious impact of the service components on joint war fighting. As such the final portion of this thesis will focus on various proposals designed to accomplish a top-down restructuring to better support post-Cold War joint operations and strategic requirements.

V. TOWARD A NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

A. CHANGES FOR THE NEW WORLD ORDER

The at times exhaustive review of the previous chapters on the development of the Unified Command Plan and the range of possible alternatives presented throughout the last fifty years is ultimately focused on one goal: to point the way for the design of a new strategic framework within which the U.S. will conduct military operations in the post-Cold War world. There have been several proposals put forward in the past few years that in part address this goal, and some changes have even been put into effect with dispatch once the services' opposition have been accommodated or overruled.

1. The Base Force and the Establishment of the U.S. Strategic Command

In the wake of the Gulf War, JCS Chairman General Colin Powell moved forward with an aggressive program of UCP reform which had been under continuous development since 1989. Upon his accession to the Chairmanship, General Powell acted quickly to develop a post-Cold War framework in which the need for America's security role in the world and

its remaining military forces could be articulated and justified.

This framework - known as the Base Force - was "intended to convey that his proposed force structure represented a floor below which the United States could not go and still carry out its responsibilities as a superpower, rather than as a ceiling from which it could further reduce its forces". The Base Force was presented in terms of four conceptual force packages: the Atlantic Force, the Pacific Force, Strategic Forces, and the Contingency Force.

Providing a presence in Europe and the Persian Gulf, the Atlantic Force would be composed of mobility forces, backed by U.S.-based heavy reinforcements oriented toward Eurasia. Supplemented by U.S.-based reinforcements, the Pacific Force would provide a land-based presence in Korea and Japan, together with maritime bases and presence in the Pacific region. A modified triad, relying primarily on sea-based systems, would comprise the Strategic Forces, while the Contingency Force would be composed of U.S.-based predominantly light forces, deployed maritime forces, mobility forces, and special operations forces.¹⁹⁸

As part of the institution of this conceptual force package, the Bush Administration in late 1991 announced the merger of the Navy's Ballistic Missile Submarine Forces with those of the Air Force's Strategic Air Command. The new organization created out of this marriage

¹⁹⁸Lorna S. Jaffe, The Development of the Base Force 1989-1992 (Washington, D.C.: Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1993) 21.

- the U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) - was designated as a Unified Command and assumed operational control of all strategic nuclear forces in June 1992.¹⁹⁹

This move represented the first major UCP reorganization of the post-Cold War era, and it helped set the stage for the further consolidation of service-dominated Specified Commands into Unified Commands. The Chairman's tri-annual report to the Secretary of Defense and Congress on the roles, missions, and functions of the armed services, which was due to be delivered in the winter of 1992-1993, provided further means to push the reorganization of the UCP in the direction of the Base Force.

General Powell, riding on a crest of prestige not enjoyed by a serving officer in many years and greatly empowered by Goldwater-Nichols, was presented with a rare opportunity to effect far-reaching changes in the organization, mission, and employment of American military forces. In the end, he chose not to take unilateral action in this area and instead worked within the joint planning system of the JCS. What emerged was a consensus document that by and large attempted to defend the current structure and missions of the four services.

¹⁹⁹Michael B. Perini, "SAC Adjusts to a Post-Cold War Era," Airman January 1992, 13.

2. The Evolution of the U.S. Atlantic Command

Although General Powell's "Roles and Missions" Review came down generally on the side of the *status quo*, an important exception to that trend was his recommendation to restructure the mission - although not the AOR - of the U.S. Atlantic Command. Under this plan, which was quickly endorsed by Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, the Air Combat Command (ACC) and Forces Command (FORSCOM) would become full-time subordinate service components of LANTCOM (as is currently the Atlantic Fleet). As part of this process, FORSCOM would lose its status as a specified command, but both it and ACC would pick up new joint warfighting component responsibilities in addition to performing their more traditional role of providing trained and ready forces to the theater CINCs. Fleet Marine Force Atlantic (FMFLANT), which serves as the Marine "type" command of the Atlantic Fleet, would obtain a voice at the 'joint' table through the 'dual-hatting' of CG, FMFLANT as Commander, Marine Forces Atlantic (COMMARFORLANT)²⁰⁰

While retaining its current AOR and NATO supreme command function, LANTCOM also becomes responsible for the

²⁰⁰Paul David Miller, "A New Mission for Atlantic Command," Joint Force Quarterly Summer 1993, 80-87.

joint training and readiness of all CONUS-based conventional forces, less those stationed on the west coast under the command of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. To better reflect its more balanced joint focus and completion, the post of USCINCLANT will become an any-service nominative position (it is a Navy post by tradition, not statute) when the serving CINC, Admiral Paul David Miller, has completed his term of office. The changes to LANTCOM's mission and structure were put into effect on 1 October 1993.

The seeds of this reorganization go back at least as far as the Cuban Missile Crisis, when the previous incarnations of ACC and FORSCOM had served on a temporary basis as service components of LANTCOM. What is quite different about this arrangement is that, unlike the Navy and Marine components, both ACC and FORSCOM now have extensive control over and responsibilities for Guard and Reserve readiness and integration. This arguably produces a different outlook from the active forces-orientation of the sea services, and with the ever-increasing reliance on mobilization forces, one has to consider whether or not ACC and FORSCOM can adequately manage both a ready "warfighting" mission and the reserve mobilization mission.

3. Outside Proposals on UCP Reorganization

In a monograph recently published by the Henry L. Stimson Center entitled *Key West Revisited: Roles and Missions of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Twenty-first Century*, the authors argue for a complete revision of the Unified Command Plan based on the need for the U.S. to "tailor its forces to meet a new array of military threats and to exploit continuing technological developments".²⁰¹ The outline of that report's recommendations are:

- A) a Contingency Forces Command, to be comprised of;
 - (1) the Air Combat Command,
 - (2) the Army's Forces Command,
 - (3) the Atlantic Fleet,
 - (4) the Pacific Fleet, and
 - (5) an Army Peacekeeping Command.
- (B) Three Geographic Commands;
 - (1) the Atlantic Command,
 - (2) the Pacific Command, and
 - (3) the Central Command.
- (C) the Strategic Command, to include;
 - (1) the Air Force Space Command, and
 - (2) a Continental Defense Command, and
- (D) the Special Operations Command.

In regard to the U.S. Transportation Command, the report states that

²⁰¹Barry M. Blechman et al., Key West Revisited: Roles and Missions of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Twenty-first Century, Report No.8 (The Henry L. Stimson Center, 1993) 13.

[t]hought should be given to the need for this unified command. An alternative would be to maintain specified Air Force and Navy Commands for airlift and sealift, respectively, as part of the Contingency Forces Command.²⁰²

The mission of the Contingency Forces Command would be

to ensure the compatibility and interoperability of all U.S. ground, sea, and air forces - both active and reserve. Services would continue to recruit, organize, train, and maintain those deployed in the United States in peacetime. The Contingency Forces Command, however, would be responsible for developing joint doctrine, for ensuring the compatibility of equipment, and for planning and carrying out joint training and integrated exercises in the United States.²⁰³

In regard to the geographic commands, the report offers little in the way of detail concerning their boundaries, other than to suggest that, with the imminent departure of U.S. forces from Panama, Southern Command's AOR could then be included in the Atlantic Command's.²⁰⁴ Surprisingly, the role of the European Command in this new structure is not specifically mentioned either way in the report, although one might infer that it would be relegated to a sub-unified command of LANTCOM along the lines of the U.S. Forces Korea - PACOM relationship.

²⁰²Key West Revisited, 16.

²⁰³Key West Revisited, 16.

²⁰⁴Key West Revisited, 16. (see footnote 6)

Taking a different tack is Richard Holloran, a former military correspondent for the New York Times, who in 1990 (before Desert Shield/Storm) focused not on theater-level command issues but instead on the restructuring of conventional forces based in the U.S..²⁰⁵ He argued that future wars in which American forces would fight would not be in Korea or Western Europe, which due to their wealth and power are more and more capable of defending themselves, but rather in the Third World.

With this as his perspective, he called for a more effective grouping of U.S.-based conventional forces to better deal with the post-Cold War challenges for the U.S. military presented by warfare in the Third World. He envisioned a CONUS-based Army in which, by the year 2000,

the light forces will be organized into two corps-sized expeditionary forces - one on the Atlantic Coast and one on the Pacific. Each expeditionary force will contain a light infantry, an airborne, an air assault, and a marine division, plus robust combat support and logistics train, all under the operational control of the force commander.²⁰⁶

Holloran hoped that

²⁰⁵Richard Halloran, "An Army for the Twenty-first Century," in The United States Army: Challenges and Missions for the 1990s (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1991) Edited by Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr. and Richard H. Shultz, Jr. pp. 247-258.

²⁰⁶Holloran, 249.

A reinvigorated army in the year 2000 will have resolved the issue of close air support in one of two ways: by recapturing the mission, the pilots, and the airplanes from the Air Force and integrating them into air-ground teams like the Marine Corps or by giving up on the air force and relying on helicopters, long-range artillery, and precision-guided missiles for battlefield interdiction.²⁰⁷

As part of this restructuring toward "light" and "expeditionary" forces, the Navy and the Air Force would be required to dedicate vastly increased resources toward expanding the nation's strategic airlift and sealift capacity. The Army's heavy forces would be either converted to light units or placed partially in the reserves.

Recognizing that he was calling for some extraordinary changes in the way the four services do things, Holloran nevertheless maintained that it must be done because

...the United States cannot afford, either militarily or financially, to underwrite the growing bickering between the army and the Marine Corps over the expeditionary mission or another duplication of effort. The United States needs both, and needs both to work together in common cause.²⁰⁸

To ensure that the services came on board, "command of an expeditionary force would be given, in the bureaucratic

²⁰⁷Holloran, 249.

²⁰⁸Holloran, 255.

tradition that prevails in the armed forces, in rotation to a lieutenant general from each of the corps' four elements" as would the other key positions on the staff.²⁰⁹

Morton H. and David Halperin in 1985 approached the problem in a third manner.²¹⁰ Seeing the roles and missions compromises reached at the urging of then-Defense Secretary Forrester during the famous conference at Key West in 1948 as the source of many (if not most) of the unity of command problems since the end of the Second World War, the Halperins recommended that this agreement be completely restructured. They argued that

the basic principle that should guide any reform effort is that *no branch of the military should have to rely on other branches in order to carry out its duties.* No longer should the services be expected to divert money from programs they care about the most in order to provide support for rival services. No longer should senseless turf rules prevent the services from carrying out their primary functions.²¹¹ [emphasis mine]

As a consequence, the Army would be free to procure and operate its own CAS and tactical airlift aircraft, as

²⁰⁹Holloran, 256.

²¹⁰David H. and Morton Halperin, "Rewriting the Key West Accord," in Reorganizing America's Defense: Leadership in War and Peace (Washington, D.C.: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1985) Edited by Robert J. Art, Vincent Davis, and Samuel Huntington, pp. 344-358.

²¹¹David H. and Morton Halperin, 355.

well as strategic sealift ships. The Navy and Marines would be able to concentrate on sea control and power projection missions, while the Air Force would be able to devote its time and energy on strategic bombing and air superiority missions.

4. An Assessment of Current Initiatives

Although many interesting and thought-provoking proposals such as the ones surveyed in the previous section have surfaced in the last several years, most are highly unrealistic because they either call for the massive restructuring of one or more of the armed services or they attempt to impose a bureaucratic solution to the issue of unity of command that subordinates major service administrative headquarters to a super-unified command.

In the case of the latter approach, solutions such as those proposed in *Key West Revisited* or recently undertaken at the Atlantic Command tend to run against the grain of recent experience in non-military areas. Using American business as an example - perhaps a risky one, given some its problems - U.S. corporations are now finding that downsizing and decentralization is the method that best allows their individual product managers to react quickly and efficiently to the demands of a rapidly changing market

place. In contrast, the solution instituted at LANTCOM involves the consolidation of three very different service bureaucracies (or four, if you count the Marine Forces Component) under one headquarters.

The closest civilian equivalent to this solution might be to consolidate GM, Ford, and Chrysler under one "super" corporate headquarters - without significantly reducing the individual companies' authority to develop their own products - and then expect a superior common product to be produced, or even a multitude of different products with common components. Needless to say, even GM seems to have learned that this approach does not lead to a better automobile, and thus it has made a significant effort not only to reduce the size of its work force, but to empower those corporate divisions that remain with greater latitude to focus on their market niche. I believe that there lies within this experience a lesson from which the American military can profit.

At the other extreme lies the approach suggested by the Halperins, which essentially advocates that the individual services each develop the ability to wage war more or less independent of the others. They maintained that allowing each to argue for and devote resources to

their preferred missions would result in focused, capable fielded forces.

The problem with this approach is first that, with the defense budget in a precipitous decline with no real end-state in sight (remember how long the Base Force remained the bottom line), highly-specialized forces that don't employ fighters or tanks will be further marginalized or will disappear entirely, only to be rediscovered as an urgent combat requirement when a major war erupts. Mine warfare, special operations forces, and combat search and rescue are but three examples of important missions that have in times past been allowed to decline in such a decision-making environment.

The second and more important objection to this approach is that, with the number of active formations declining to a fifty-year low and their readiness, reconstitution, and training state likely to follow the same trend, the U.S. military is rapidly approaching a point where it cannot afford to lose the first big battle of the next war because it may not be able to recover for years. One way to prevent or at least ameliorate such a setback under the conditions that I have related is to ensure that all of the units that we expend precious strategic air and sea lift on in order to bring them into a theater are able

to be fully integrated into a joint team and employed in a flexible manner by the CinC. The only way to ensure that this will be the case is to establish a system of peacetime joint command that maintains the maximum contact and interoperability between the warfighting forces of each of the services - not simply at the four-star service component commander staff level.

Thus, the formation in peacetime of mixed combat organizations, such as those proposed by Richard Holloran, would provide the most effective instrument for joint warfighting, although his particular approach is far too radical to get past the service bureaucracies and their Congressional and industry supporters. Also, a glaring inconsistency in his argument is the absence of a Marine Air Wing - which he cites later as a desirable solution in regard to the Army's CAS problem - from his proposed joint Army-Marine Expeditionary Corps.

A more successful approach may be to continue to de-emphasize the combat role of service components and concentrate instead on increasing operational interaction at the one-and two-star level, particularly between the Army and Marine Corps. This would help preserve service identity at the division, wing, and battle group level, yet still facilitate further interoperability at the two- and three-

star, rather than four-star, level of coordination. Boosting greater confidence at this level is where measurable progress can be best achieved without unduly threatening service prerogatives or survival.

B. THE ALTERNATIVE: A NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

1. Three Conceptual Groups of Forces: Theater, Regional, and Strategic

Samuel P. Huntington, in a 1984 article titled *Organization and Strategy*, called for the establishment of "mission commands, not area commands".²¹² Noting that "the current structure of unified and specified commands thus often tends to unify things that should not be unified and to divide things that should be under single command", Huntington argues that while some degree of divided command is inevitable, "the problem is to identify that form of division that is least injurious to the accomplishment of the mission at hand".²¹³

Huntington's view of that approach was to follow the Soviet method of unity of command, in which

²¹²Samuel P. Huntington, "Organization and Strategy," Public Interest, Spring 1984. Reprinted in Reorganizing America's Defenses: Leadership in War and Peace (Robert J. Art, Vincent Davis, and Samuel P. Huntington, Editors) (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1985) 251.

²¹³Huntington, 250.

in some cases the services are responsible for operational missions and in other cases they are not. In keeping with this general approach, unified and specified commands should normally be organized in terms of mission, not area, and the scope of a command should be extended to all forces directly relevant to its mission.²¹⁴[emphasis mine]

As an example, he offered that

[t]he Strategic Air Command, for instance, should be converted into a strategic retaliatory command incorporating the ballistic missile submarines that are now assigned to three other commands. In keeping with the recommendations of various groups, the military airlift command might also be changed into a logistics command including sealift and related activities as well as airlift.²¹⁵

We of course now recognize these entities as the U.S.

Strategic Command and the U.S. Transportation Command.

In regard to the geographic commands, Huntington advocated this approach:

[t]he Atlantic Command...should be converted into a purely naval Atlantic sea control command, with that as its only mission. Responsibility for force projection and amphibious operations in countries bordering the Atlantic, on the other hand, should be transferred to the readiness or Southern commands. There is also little logic in the writ of the European command extending over all of Africa and a good part of the Middle East. The European command should be directed to the defense of Europe. Given the importance of the area, a separate Middle East-Levantian command would clearly be called for. In general, the scope of geographical

²¹⁴Huntington, 251.

²¹⁵Huntington, 251.

*commands should be limited to areas within which one mission is overwhelmingly dominant.*²¹⁶ [emphasis mine]

While I disagree with some of his prescriptions and others have been rendered moot by the demise of the Cold War, I believe that Huntington's basic thesis - that geographical commands should be limited to areas within which one mission is dominant - is an excellent foundation for a restructured UCP.

2. Theater Forces

What would such a system of mission-oriented, limited geographical area commands look like? If one accepts currently-espoused U.S. grand strategy as the basis for the structuring of limited-area unified commands, then the answer is clear. There are three areas of the world that the U.S. has openly declared to be of such vital national interest that - even after the collapse of the USSR - it is automatically willing to throw U.S. troops into the line of fire in their defense: Western Europe, Southwest Asia, and Northeast Asia.²¹⁷ These three geographical areas

²¹⁶Huntington, 251.

²¹⁷see Press Release entitled Secretary Aspin Announces Bottom Up Review Results, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), 1 September 1993) 5-6 for summary of major regional contingencies (MRCs).

are "theaters of military operations" in the traditional use of the word, and as such they truly deserve the title of Theater Commands in the Unified Command Plan of the "New World Order".

In Western Europe, the U.S. is still bound to the collective defense of the region through NATO, although the rationale behind this commitment is under increasing challenge at home. Recent efforts to transform the alliance into a European collective security organization or to expand its charter to include an out-of-area mission have been at best marginally successful. But for the purposes of this thesis, the future of NATO is largely irrelevant. The fact that bears on this thesis is that U.S. forces will continue to be firmly wedded to European defense for the foreseeable future (the 'Bottom Up Review' commits to a figure of 100,000 U.S. troops in Europe and 98,000 in Northeast Asia) as an insurance policy against the political situation taking a sudden turn for the worse.

The question remains as to what should be the limits of the European Theater Command's area of responsibility (AOR). If the framework proposed by Huntington were adopted, then both the Levant and Africa (with the exception

of its northern coastal region) should remain out of EUCOM's new AOR. During the Cold War, the inclusion of these areas in the former's AOR served some larger strategic purpose in the context of an anticipated global NATO-Warsaw Pact war that would be centered on the North German plain. It now clearly serves no such purpose other than perhaps to keep the EUCOM staff occupied in what is - for the time being, at least - a relatively quiet theater in terms of military operations, although a commitment of U.S. forces in the former Yugoslavia would change this. In addition to its new, more focused AOR, EUCOM should retain an area of interest (AOI) that extends eastward to the Ural Mountains, because political and military events in Eastern Europe will continue to directly impact on Western European security for years to come.

Southwest Asia, for the last ten years the responsibility of the U.S. Central Command, clearly falls within Huntington's limited area framework. If there is any problem with the AOR of CENTCOM in this context, it is that it was too limited by virtue of the grafting of Israel, Lebanon, and Syria to EUCOM after the merging of NELM's AOR into the former in 1963. The time is ripe for this 'natural' part of the Middle East to fall within the AOR of CENTCOM, although the bordering areas of the

Mediterranean Sea could remain under the control of EUCOM until otherwise directed in order to ensure proper coordination of anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and anti-surface warfare (ASUW) on NATO's southern flank. On the other side of the region, it appears that Pakistan would best be left out of CENTCOM's AOR due to its long history of peaceful relations with Iran and since most of its pressing security concerns are with its South Asian neighbors.

Northeast Asia, which is best defined as that strategic (in U.S. terms) area of the world that encompasses the intersection of Japan, Manchurian China, the Korean Peninsula, and the Russian Far East, also falls easily within Huntington's limited-area framework. Like Europe, nearly 100,000 U.S. military personnel are projected to remain in the region even after the Secretary Aspin's 1993 "Bottom Up Review" of force structure and strategy. Unlike Europe, Northeast Asia continues to be a tension-filled area where the U.S. could find itself enmeshed in a major war, potentially within the space of a few days or even hours. Current American strategic thought envisions that rather than reinforce South Korea with a huge U.S. field army at the outset of renewed hostilities in Korea, the initial intent would be to largely limit U.S. military activity to

air and naval strikes in support of the ROK Army - with Japan serving as both a base and a sanctuary.

While the forward-based forces in Korea and Japan currently belong to separate sub-unified commands of the U.S. Pacific Command, the operational environment in this region is so fundamentally different from the rest of the Pacific region as to warrant a separate unified command. This command, which I propose to call the Northeast Asia Theater Command, should have an AOR that includes both Koreas, the Japanese Islands and their surrounding waters, as well as an area of interest (AOI) that would include much of the Russian Far East and Eastern Manchuria. It should not include Taiwan, which has a traditional albeit downgraded bi-lateral defense relationship with the U.S. which is unrelated to the immediate defense of South Korea and Japan, nor should it include the other countries of East and Southeast Asia.

3. Regional (or Area) Commands

With the aforementioned "theater commands" defined in terms of a limited-area, single-mission charter, this raises the question of how the rest of the world might be approached in terms of unified military command. As it turns out, the remaining areas of the world are largely

characterized (in military terms) by a series of bilateral relations between the U.S. and individual countries. Even the Rio Treaty falls within this category, since it was fashioned in terms of a common defense of the Western Hemisphere against outside (read Soviet) aggression. In the post-Cold War world, the external military threat to that hemisphere seems virtually non-existent. Thus any pattern of conflict there in the future will likely revert to that of the intra-American feuds of the 19th and early 20th centuries or perhaps a civil war in Cuba. With the last U.S. combat troops scheduled to depart Panama by the end of the decade, the absence of 'trip-wire' forces will mean that the U.S. will retain some flexibility (in theory) before responding to any inter-Latin American wars, and then on a case-by-case basis.

The question remains how then to divide up the "rest" of the world in a way that ensures effective unity of command when required. Clearly there is no further need for the Southern Command under the set of circumstances described above, and the Atlantic Command appears to be equally without a major (aside from the ever-present Cuban and Haitian contingencies) mission with the disappearance of the Soviet Northern Fleet from the North Atlantic. Due to the ever-present possibility of a major war in South Asia,

the Pacific Command seems to still have a somewhat relevant mission, even if Northeast Asia were amputated from its AOR as I have proposed. This is not to suggest that the U.S. necessarily has to throw its weight behind one combatant or another, but rather that it may have to attempt leverage against both in order to limit the spread of the conflict and prevent its escalation to the use of weapons of mass destruction. Managing the military response to such a conflict would certainly require the full attention of a unified command consisting mainly of a large naval component.

One way for the U.S. to organize the remainder of the world into an acceptable unified command arrangement would be to divide it into two areas or regions; Atlantic and Pacific. The Pacific Regional (or Area) Command would include the present AOR of PACOM less the proposed Northeast Asia Theater Command. Unlike the present PACOM, its western boundary would end well off the east coast of Africa rather than at the low-tide mark on its shore. The Atlantic Regional (or Area) Command would be created by merging the present SOUTHCOM and LANTCOM AORs, as well as the addition of sub-Saharan Africa and its surrounding waters. Thus, it would be responsible for military operations in all of Central and South America, sub-Saharan Africa, the waters

immediately surrounding these areas, and the majority of the Atlantic Ocean (less the Western Approaches to the U.K.).

(see map in Appendix J)

The primary mission of these regional commands would be to exercise appropriate command of U.S. forces operating within their respective AORs, including contingency planning. A key secondary mission would be to ensure the security of the air and sea lines of communication between the U.S. and the three theater commands, as well as to serve as a supporting command for theater CinCs when directed. In practice, this would mean that the Pacific Area Command would support the Northeast Asia Theater while the Atlantic Area Command would support the European Theater. The Southwest Asia Theater would continue to be supported by both the Pacific and Atlantic Commands.

4. Forces (Strategic) Commands

With the three theater and two area commands defined above, what remains is to decide on the appropriate grouping of U.S.-based forces. Rather than follow the new Atlantic Command model, which groups these forces by area (i.e. all general purpose conventional forces in the U.S., less specified forces for PACOM), why not proceed along Huntington's lines and group these forces by mission?

When one surveys the major conventional forces stationed throughout the U.S., a general pattern emerges that suggests that there are meaningful differences between the various categories of forces in terms of deployability, sustainability, combat capability, and readiness that should be considered. Table 1. may help to visualize these variations. The 'early arrival' end of the spectrum includes units such as the Army's Light and Airborne Divisions, Air Force Composite Wings, Navy 'ready' Carrier Battle Groups, and Marine Maritime Prepositioned Ship (MPS) Brigades and Air Contingency Forces that can begin to arrive at a trouble spot within days or hours of a Presidential decision to do so, depending on the level of threat and the sophistication of the receiving ports and airfields. Using Desert Storm as a model, these are the "0-to-30 day" rapid deployment forces in the U.S. military inventory.

Toward the middle of the spectrum are 'medium' units such as the Army's 101st Air Assault and 24th (Mechanized) Infantry Divisions, which are (or will soon be) configured to move quickly by sea and air to either join up with forward assault elements or deploy in a 'permissive' area of a theater. Also in this grouping are the XVIII Airborne Corps Headquarters and combat support echelons, the MPS-

TABLE 1. Notional Deployment Timeline for
U.S.-Based Forces

<u>Notional Deployment Timetable (in days)</u>					
0.....30.....60.....90.....120.....150.....180+					
<u>Army</u>	10th Mountain Division	82nd Airborne Division	24th Infantry (Mech) Div	1st Infantry (Mech) Div	4th Infantry (Mech) Div
	25th Infantry (Light) Div	101st Air Assault Division	1st Cavalry Division	2nd Armored Division	National Guard (Mech) Div
	XVIII Corps (+ support)		I Corps (+ support)		III Corps (+ support)
<u>USMC</u>	MPS Brigades (x3)	Amphibious Brigades (x2)			
		MEF HQs (x2) Div/WingHQ (x2) (+ support)		Div/WingHQ (Reserve) (+ support)	
<u>Navy</u>	CVBG (x3)	CVBG (x2)	CVBG (x3)	CVBG (x2)	CVBG (Res)
<u>USAF</u>	Wing (C)	Wing (F)	Wing (B)	Wing (T)	
	Wing (C)	Wing (T)			
	#AirForce HQ (+ support)				

based Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) Headquarters with their organic support units, afloat Marine Expeditionary Brigades to "kick in the front door" if required, additional specialized and partly-reserve Air Force and Air National Guard wings and groups (such as the F-4G "Wild Weasel" and

A-10 wings), and reinforcing second echelon naval battle force units. Again using DESERT SHIELD as a model, these might fairly be referred to as "30-to-90" day forces, because this figure represents their approximate deployment time from the U.S. to distant theaters.

Toward the far end of the spectrum are the Army Divisions with "roundout" National Guard Brigades, Army National Guard combat brigades and divisions, Army and Air Force Reserve combat support and combat service support formations, Naval Reserve Force minesweepers, frigates, and aircraft squadrons (and soon an aircraft carrier), and Marine Reserve forces. All require a certain amount of personnel augmentation as well as additional individual and unit training before they can be effectively employed in a theater of war. They can be best described as "90-day plus", because under the best conditions it would take at least 90 days before a CinC would even see these forces in his theater of operations, and even then, he might not have complete faith in their ability to satisfactorily complete assigned combat missions.

There is of course a degree of artificiality in the deployment spectrum presented above, because when a particular division or wing arrives in theater is highly dependent upon its relative value (and thus its airlift and

sealift priority) to the CINC. The Air Force does not follow as strong of a deployment pattern as the other services, because even its reserve and guard units are maintained in a relatively high state of readiness. But while the Air Force has a great degree of latitude about which of its combat wings are deployed to a distant theater in a crisis, theater reception base constraints and the high portion of its sustaining support forces in the reserves can be mitigating factors in deployment flows.

The forces shown in the Table 1. above were representative of the forces available for deployment to the Arabian Peninsula in late 1990 and early 1991. If strategic planning is revised to take into account the recommendations of the Clinton Administration's Bottom-Up Review (BUR) as the maximum U.S. conventional force level by the end of this decade, then the active combat forces will consist of 11 (+1 reserve) aircraft carriers, 10 divisions, 13 Fighter Wings, and 5 MEBs.²¹⁸

²¹⁸The Army in late 1992 announced a plan to dramatically increase the deployability of U.S.-based forces through the use of 20 new high-speed transport ships and a fleet of 120 C-17 airlifters. The goal was "to deploy five divisions [1 light, 1 airborne, 1 air assault, and 2 mechanized] plus their supporting combat units, logistics troops and supplies, to the theater within 5 days. See Neil Munro, "U.S. Army Steps Up Efforts to Bolster Rapid Deployment," Defense News August 24-30, 1992, 10.

Assuming that the portion of these forces based in CONUS is 6 divisions (plus one in Hawaii), 7 fighter wings, 10 (+1) carriers, and 4 MEBS, they could be grouped in several Forces Commands along common deployability and readiness criterion. The result of such a grouping of forces might look something like the following:

	<u>Rapid Deployment (D-Day to D+30) Forces</u>	<u>Expeditionary or Early Reinforcing (D+30 to D+90) Forces</u>	<u>Strategic Mobilization (D+90 or more) Forces</u>
<u>Army</u>	10thMtnDiv(Lt) 82ndAirborneDiv	24thInfDiv(Mech)* 101stAirAsltDiv	1stInfDiv(Mech)(-) 1st Cavalry Div(-)
<u>USMC</u>	6th MEB(MPS)** 7th MEB(MPS) 1st MEB(MPS)	4thMEB(Amphibious) 5thMEB(Amphibious) I MEF/1MarDiv/3MAWHQ II MEF/2MarDiv/2MAWHQ	MarineReserveForce 4th Marine Div 4thMarAirWing 4thForServeSupGru
<u>Navy</u>	CVBG(Forward) CVBG(Forward) CVBG(Ready) CVBG(Ready)	CVBG CVBG CVBG CVBG CVBG	CV/CVW(Reserve) MineWarfareGroup SurfGroup(Reserve) CVBG*** CVBG
<u>USAF</u>	Wing(Composite) Wing(Composite)	Fighter Wing(x4) Bomber Wing(x2) Tanker Wing(x2)	Fighter Wing(x2) Bomber Wing(x) Tanker Wing(x)

Notes: * Lead Echelons of 24th would deploy by Fast Sealift Ships (FSS). It is assumed that, in dropping from 12 to 10 active divisions, the Army will remove two 'heavy' division headquarters, leaving 7 U.S.-based active divisions plus several brigades.

** MPS=Maritime Prepositioned Ships with equipment and 30 days supply for a 13,000 man Marine Expeditionary Brigade flown in from U.S..

***The assumption is that two or three CVBGs would already be forward-deployed to the theater CinCs; two more would be immediately deployable from

CONUS, four would require a month or two to complete training and work-ups, one or two would be in the shipyard for 4-6 months, and one would be in multi-year overhaul and/or refueling.

If the Expeditionary or Early-Reinforcing Forces are further divided according to geographic base, an interesting pattern begins to appear. Currently based in the states of the southeastern seaboard (VA, NC, SC, GA, and FL) are the five aircraft carrier battle groups (CVBGs) of the 2nd Fleet, the 24th Infantry Division, the division, aircraft wing, and service support group of the Second Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF), and wings of the 9th Air Force. Located in states along the Pacific coast (AL, WA, OR, and CA) are major units including five CVBGs of the 3rd Fleet, the division, air wing, and service support group of the First Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF), the headquarters of I Corps with several scattered active light infantry brigades (plus the 25th Division in Hawaii), and half a dozen fighter and bomber wings of the 11th and 12th Air Forces.

Other complementary mission and geographic groupings stand out in this manner. The 82nd Airborne, 101st Air Assault, and 10th Mountain Divisions are all located within close proximity along the Appalachian Mountain range, as is the 23rd Composite Wing at Pope Air Force Base. The 1st

Cavalry and 1st Infantry Divisions are both located in the lower Midwest and Southwest (CO, KA, and TX). Most of the Navy Reserve ships will be based in Gulf Ports by the end of the decade, as will the Mine Warfare Command. The Marine Reserve Force headquarters is also now based out of New Orleans. Again, the geographical distribution of Air Force combat wings is not as focused, but it has reinforcing fighter and bomber wings scattered throughout the midwest and southwest under the command of the 12th Air Force. Included in that force are one-of-a-kind wings for the F-117, the F-111/EF-111, and the F-4G, as well as projected USAF Reserve and ANG B-1B and B-52 Wings.

With a few minor changes, the U.S. could create four joint force groupings that are complementary both in mission and geographic location:

(1) a Rapid Deployment/Contingency Force, based on the XVIII Airborne Corps headquarters but including as well the 23rd Wing at Pope AFB. The two battalion-sized Marine Air Contingency Forces (ACFs) on each coast could also come under the operational control of this RDF when required.

(2) an Atlantic Expeditionary (or Early Reinforcing) Force, with 2nd Fleet, II MEF, 9th Air Force, and the 24th Infantry Division as major operational commands. To further the cause of "jointness", the 24th ID could be brought under the operational control of II MEF in order to form an "Atlantic Expeditionary Corps",

(3) a Pacific Expeditionary (or Early Reinforcing) Force, with 3rd Fleet, I MEF, 11th Air Force, and I Corps as its major operational commands. Since I MEF and I Corps have

different primary operational commitments (I MEF to SWA, I Corps to Korea) and their closest active units are based almost 500 miles apart, there is little reason or benefit to combine them into one Expeditionary Corps headquarters.

(4) a Strategic Mobilization Force, consisting of partially-active and reserve units such as III Corps, Naval and Marine Reserve Forces, and Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard groups.

Compared with General Powell's Base Force, which apportioned U.S.- based conventional units among the lines of conceptual Atlantic, Pacific, and Contingency Forces, this proposed course of action further distills the essential purpose of these forces and combines them into more cohesive and focused joint commands.

To complete this process, I propose following General Cushman's advice to provide

some day-to-day "authority, direction, and control" of a sizeable all-service joint task force, which they could then train and otherwise prepare for employment in the variety of possible conditions under which they might be required to fight.²¹⁹

This would best be served by the assignment of the proposed Atlantic Expeditionary/Early-Reinforcing Force to the Atlantic Area Command and the Pacific Force to the Pacific Area Command. In regard to the theater commands, only CENTCOM would be without sizeable in-place forces, so the Rapid Deployment/Contingency Force or the Strategic

²¹⁹Cushman, Planning 112.

Mobilization Forces could be assigned to primarily support CENTCOM with the understanding that, since the RD/CF's mission would truly be a worldwide one, this force would be assigned to other CINCs as the situation dictates.

The remaining U.S.-based forces are already reasonably grouped along mission lines, so there is little reason to alter their organization. Strategic Deterrence and Defense forces have been combined since 1991 into the U.S. Strategic Command, and it appears that the U.S. Space Command will soon be merged into that organization as well. This issue has been a somewhat contentious one with the Navy, since it fears complete Air Force domination of space systems that it views as vital to its day-to-day naval operations, but satisfactory safeguards will probably be found to assuage those concerns.

The U.S. Transportation Command has since 1987 owned all of the nation's strategic airlift and sealift forces, and the U.S. Special Operations Command seems to be satisfactorily executing its responsibilities for the nourishment, oversight, advocacy, and coordination of the services' special operations forces. Both seem to have achieved - or at least are making good progress toward - the kind of interoperability and joint perspective deemed

essential by the crafters of Goldwater-Nichols for the effective conduct of modern warfare.

This is not to suggest that what is being proposed would be acceptable to all the services. The apportioning of significant amounts of air power to the three theater and two area CINCs clearly runs against the Air Force's preference for a U.S.-based warfighting command.²²⁰ Even within the U.S., the Air Force would prefer to keep its numbered Air Forces under the centralized command of the Air Combat Command - which now has a warfighting mission as the air component of LANTCOM - rather than piecemeal them out to Area CINCs.

The same objections would likely arise concerning the establishment of a Northeast Asia Theater. Just as the Air Force would not want to split off its forces in Northeast Asia from the control of the Pacific Air Force, the Navy would not want the Pacific Fleet to lose control of the 7th Fleet. The Marines would also object to the

²²⁰see Barbara Opall, "General Urges Unified U.S.-Based Command to Direct War," Defense News August 10-16, 1992, 11. General Loh, the ACC Commander, indicated that "the United States no longer can afford to assign U.S.-based squadrons to overseas commands as prescribed by Goldwater-Nichols". He emphasized that "[t]oday, all of my forces are going to the same war...We don't have sufficient forces to allocate to six different unified commands, so they all have to be trained and be prepared to fight in a variety of theaters".

assignment of the Okinawa-based III MEF to the proposed Northeast Asia Command, preferring as well that it remain under Fleet Marine Force, Pacific command. Only the Army would likely find the proposed reorganization acceptable, since it would give the CINC in Northeast Asia a greater amount of control over the forces that would have to bear the brunt of initial combat operations in a war on the Korean Peninsula.

Assuming that these objections could be overcome or circumvented, the proposed restructuring of U.S. Unified Commands and supporting operational-level forces might appear as follows:

(1) European Theater Command - includes projected in-theater forces in Europe and the Mediterranean. (see Appendix B)

(2) Northeast Asia Theater Command - includes projected in-theater forces in Korea, Japan, and Okinawa. (see Appendix C)

(3) Southwest Asia Theater Command - includes in-theater forces plus training/traditional relationship with either the Rapid Deployment/Contingency Force or the Mobilization/Reinforcing Forces Command. (see Appendix D)

(4) Atlantic Area (or Region) Command - includes the Atlantic Expeditionary/Early Reinforcing Forces Command. (see Appendix E)

(5) Pacific Area (or Region) Command - includes the Pacific Expeditionary/Early Reinforcing Forces Command. (see Appendix F)

(6) Rapid Deployment (or Contingency) Forces Command - includes XVIII Corps HQ (serving as a JTF HQ), the 82nd Airborne, 101st Air Assault, and 10th Mountain Divisions, the 23rd Wing, and Marine Air Contingency Force units. (see Appendix G)

(7) Reinforcing (or Mobilization) Forces Command - includes 'one of a kind' air units and the partially-manned and mobilization air, sea, and land forces that comprise the nation's conventional 'strategic reserve'. (see Appendix H)

(8) Strategic Deterrence and Defense Forces Command (STRATCOM).

(9) Strategic Transportation Forces Command (TRANSCOM)

(10) Special Operations Forces Command (SOCOM).

5. The Role of Service Commands

If the Theater/Area/Forces Unified Command Structure proposed above were adopted, this would inevitably lead to the question of the appropriate role of senior service commands such as Forces Command, Air Combat Command, and Air Mobility Command. Assuming that these commands serve a valuable function regarding the support, training, and administration of the services' fielded forces, how would they best complement the UCP without dominating it?

If one were to redesign these service commands in order that they achieve this goal, then one way to do so would be to leave ACC, Forces Command, and the major naval commands outside the Unified Commands. They would be accorded the role of intermediary between the Unified

Command service component and their respective Chiefs of Staff and service headquarters.

As part of this realignment, most of the training, support, and administrative responsibilities of the Atlantic and Pacific Fleet Headquarters could be consolidated into a U.S. Fleet Headquarters (similar in principle to the pre- and early World War II Navy). This revived CINC U.S. Fleet would be responsible for the traditional "type command" functions now duplicated in both the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. These Fleet headquarters, while retaining their historic titles, would be downgraded to three-star billets and would be confined to service component - but not war fighting - functions.

A similar restructuring could be applied to the Atlantic and Pacific Fleet Marine Force (FMF) headquarters, with a consolidated FMF headquarters performing the bulk of training, support, and administrative functions. For both the Navy and the Marine Corps, such a reorganization would help reduce the "bureaucrat-to-warfighter" ratio in each service as well as to assist in the standardization of the notoriously independent fleet training and operating procedures. This proposal is outlined in Appendix I.

VI. CONCLUSION

Given the primary objective of this thesis - to trace the evolution of the Unified Command Plan since the start of the Second World War in order to assess the sources of change over time - what conclusions can be drawn regarding the future of unified command? Being that changes to the UCP have been generated most often by those not in uniform - be they in the Executive or Legislative Branch - can the uniformed leadership of the U.S. armed forces build upon the joint orientation of the Powell tenure as CJCS and rationalize the UCP, or will change be forced upon it by impatient outsiders?

At the broadest level of analysis, the evidence points to the evolutionary nature of unified command. "Jointness" - spurred on by the Goldwater-Nichols Act - has clearly gained the upper hand, and it shows no sign of fading into the background, if the creation of STRATCOM and the transformation of LANTCOM are any indications. Within this larger trend, however, are some disturbing signs that these UCP changes are little more than cosmetic.

The organization and present boundaries of the area Unified Commands are a prime example. As was mentioned

earlier in this thesis, there has been no significant redrawing of UCP boundaries since the creation of CENTCOM in 1983, yet the geo-strategic situation that the U.S. faces today is fundamentally different than that of a decade ago. Absent a major naval threat, the present LANTCOM and PACOM AORs have little logic to them other than as convenient boundaries for Naval Specified Commands. Their tendency to hug the world's coastlines at the low-water mark flies in the face of the Navy's 1992 "...From the Sea" document, which emphasizes littoral warfare and de-emphasizes open-ocean sea control. It is questionable whether the Navy really gave up - assuming it had any choice in the matter - anything of value in the recent reorganization of LANTCOM, (other than a four-star position, of course) given the remote likelihood of a major contingency in that AOR. It is also questionable whether "jointness" is really achieved through that kind of organizational solution.

Without the threat of massed Soviet armies in Central Europe, EUCOM provides little specific utility other than as a support for NATO - which is under increasing pressure to justify its organizational existence - and as a headquarters for Mediterranean operations. Clearly, the latter could be performed much more effectively under the purview of a NELM-

type unified or specified command, at least in purely military terms.

Also without a plausible external threat, SOUTHCOM's operational (as opposed to advisory) missions have been reduced to the support of the faltering war on drugs, a function that more appropriately could be conducted by a sub-unified command or a JTF. Only CENTCOM's AOR and mission remain militarily relevant in the post-Cold War world, although the inclusion of the Levant would further improve the integrity of the theater. It is interesting that this vital area remains short (relative to the other CINCs) of dedicated forces, although more forces are now forward-deployed in theater than before DESERT SHIELD/STORM.

Even the internal command organization of the area Unified Commands retain a service flavor and bias. CINCUNC/CINC U.S. Forces Korea also serves as his own service component (8th Army) commander. General Schwarzkopf served as both the CINC and the *de facto* Ground Forces Commander, but if DESERT STORM had occurred during a Marine general's tenure as CINCCENT, the Army would have undoubtedly pushed for a separate overall ground forces (read Army) commander. It is ironic that, even in this new joint environment, an Army general such as Schwarzkopf can grant a degree of

autonomy to Marine forces that a Marine CINC could probably not get away with.

Given these conditions, a reorganization of the UCP is clearly in order. The proposed framework through which this should be accomplished - the creation of three Theater, two Area, and five Forces Commands - offers the best combination of mission and area of responsibility. At the same time, it preserves (through the maintenance of Forces Commands) both the flexibility of the National Command Authority and the worldwide - rather than 'Atlantic' - focus of units such as XVIII Airborne Corps, III Corps, and 12th Air Force.

There are likely to be serious problems with such a reorganization plan from all the services' perspectives. The Navy and Marine Corps will likely object to their forces being labeled as 'regional' rather than 'contingency', even though these labels are meant to apply to the numbered fleet or MEF headquarters and not to the individual battle groups or expeditionary brigades which can readily 'swing' from one theater to another. If history is a good indicator, the sea services would also object to Northeast Asia being stood up as a Unified Command, although to balance this out they would agree with the merging of SOUTHCOM and LANTCOM. Losing control of the littoral regions surrounding Korea, Japan, and the Arabian Peninsula would likewise be unpopular.

The Army's view would likely be opposite that of the Navy's and the Marine Corps', but being that the Army has pressed at times for the re-establishment of a Far Eastern Command equivalent, this may be a reasonable compromise for them to make. They may also find fault with the designation of III Corps as a 'mobilization' force, even though the Clinton Administration clearly favors a heavier reliance on National Guard "enhanced readiness" brigades that will increasingly turn this corps into a reserve outfit.

The Air Force may have a strong objection to this proposal, since as noted earlier it would distribute its various numbered Air Forces to the theater and area CINCs. This decentralization would run counter to recent Air Force attempts to further centralize not only training but war fighting responsibility in its U.S.-based Air Combat Command.

In the face of such anticipated service opposition, what is the value of the proposed UCP reorganization? First and foremost, it gives more forces and flexibility to the theater commanders that are charged with executing military operations and supporting U.S. national security policy in the exposed areas most vital to the U.S. - Southwest and Northeast Asia. Second, it draws UCP boundaries where they can be most easily deconflicted: well out to sea. Third, it

effectively differentiates between the unique requirements derived from fixed, defensive military alliances and those derived from American bi-lateral and multi-lateral operations in the rest of the world.

Finally, it preserves American strategic flexibility through the concentration (in the hands of the Secretary of Defense and the CJCS, rather than within CINCLANT) the bulk of the U.S.-based reinforcing and rapid deployment forces. Rather than taking on an 'Atlantic' focus, these forces, by remaining directly accountable to the JCS, will retain a 'worldwide' focus more appropriate to their mission.

APPENDIX A

ROLES AND MISSIONS: A PROPOSAL

1. The Relevance of the Issue

Although an examination of the "roles and missions" debate could quite easily be the subject of an entirely separate doctoral dissertation, any discussion of the larger issues of unity of command would not be complete without at least touching upon the major points in contention. The history of this debate in the U.S. military goes back at least as far as the battle for dominance between the Coastal Artillery and the Navy in the 19th Century, but for the purpose of this thesis, a focus on those issues of the last decade will suffice.

Perhaps the best place to start is with JCS Chairman General Colin Powell's "Roles, Missions, and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States" report of February 1993. In this report, which is a Goldwater-Nichols Act requirement levied on the CJCS to be submitted to the Secretary of Defense and the Congress every third year, the topics covered ranged from the relationship between the USAF and the "Air Arms" of the other services to the somewhat more mundane questions on the pros and cons of consolidation of the various service Chaplain Corps.

In the areas relating to unity of command, General Powell defended the roles of the air arms of the Navy, Army, and Marines, noting that each provides "unique but complementary capabilities" yet "all work jointly to project air power". In fact, he sought to strengthen the Army's position by including attack helicopters as CAS providers and recommending that doctrine reflect that CAS become a primary responsibility of all four services.²²¹ Even the Marine Corps was spared, with Powell noting that the Corps was consolidating its fixed-wing aircraft types from nine to four (F/A-18, AV-8B, EA-6B, and KC-130). This was not a recent decision, but rather something that the Marines had been planning to do for the better part of a decade.

The second major issue was the redundancy of the various theater air defense (missile) programs being developed by the Army and the Navy and their mutual interoperability within a theater integrated air defense system run generally by the Air Force. General Powell's recommendation was that this issue be examined in more detail via a Joint Mission Area Analysis.

²²¹see Report on the Roles, Missions, and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, February 1993.

A third area concerned the supposed redundancy between the Army's contingency and Marine Corps' expeditionary forces. Powell again defended the status quo, arguing that the present mix of capabilities was appropriate and that the total number could be adjusted as the strategic situation dictated. A related area was the issue of armor and rocket artillery, which some had suggested was an appropriate area for the Army to manage for both services. General Powell argued that the Corps should retain limited amounts of tanks appropriate to its pre-positioned ships' stocks and related training requirements, but above that minimum the Army should provide armored units as required by the mission. On the other hand, Powell recommended that the Army retain sole ownership of the Multiple-Launch Rocket System (MLRS) which, like additional armored units, could be provided to the Marines by the Army when necessary.

2. A Proposal: A "Theater" Versus "Battlefield" Mission Split

Although General Powell's recommendations seem to have prevailed over more drastic proposals and taken the momentum out of the issue - at least for the time being, roles and missions will continue to be one of the most sensitive inter-service problems and will surely be raised again within a few short years. Since some issues - in

particular, the question of CAS versus deep air support (DAS) between the Army, Air Force, and Marines - impact directly on the question of unity of command, a workable solution to the roles and missions rift must be found.

One possible answer is to agree to a division of labor on airspace command and control that recognizes the Air Force - and, in an expeditionary environment (as opposed to a "developed" or "mature" theater), the Navy - as providing the primary theater or regional air command and control agency, wherein both would retain primary missions as operators of fighter, strike, and electronic warfare aircraft. However, they would perform CAS only as a secondary mission; the Army and Marine Corps would assume the primary responsibilities as the providers of CAS.

Considering that the ground services have a direct, vested interest in the proper execution of the CAS mission, it is most sensible for them to assume the main effort in this area. In effect, this is a "battlefield" mission that requires a different mentality, training, and sense of priorities from other theater-wide "big picture" missions that I propose be shifted to Air Force and Navy primary responsibility. In the same vein, Theater Air and Anti-Ballistic Missile Defense would also shift to a primarily Air Force and Navy mission, although the Army and Marines

would retain their short-to-medium range air defense weapons (Stinger and HAWK) to allow them to maintain a local anti-air "bubble" over their maneuver forces.

Taken from theory to practice, this compromise would mean that the Army would be allowed to fly fixed-wing CAS-capable aircraft, as well as limited airborne command and control, and tanker aircraft in support of that mission. Thus, the Army would pick up several wings worth of A-10s or F-16s, and also some KC-130s for tanking and airborne command and control of CAS. These fixed-wing CAS aircraft could be organized as corps-level assets, either separately or combined with the corps helicopter and air defense brigades to form a corps air division along the lines of a Marine Aircraft Wing.

The Marine Corps, which already possesses strong fixed-wing air combat forces totaling 10 F/A-18C, 6 F/A-18D, 7 AV-8B, 4 EA-6B, and 3 KC-130 squadrons (approximately 500 total aircraft, not including training and reserve), would in this compromise lose the operational control of its EA-6Bs to the Navy or Air Force, and in practice most of its F/A-18C squadrons would be integrated into Carrier Air Wings

as their primary CAS outfit.²²² Remaining under direct Marine command would be F/A-18D, AV-8B, and KC-130 squadrons.

3. Roles and Missions: An Assessment

Under this compromise, the Army and Marine Corps CAS-capable aircraft would retain their self-defense cannons and missiles, and they would of course also retain their fleets of attack, utility, and medium and heavy transport helicopters. They would still be required to fly within the confines of the theater-wide integrated air and missile defense system, and their multi-mission aircraft could still be "hijacked" on occasion by the JFACC should the need arise. Despite this, the statutory protection that would be provided to the Army and Marine Corps under this agreement would help safeguard the aviation areas that both deem essential: short-range air defense and close air support. Still, service opposition to such an agreement undoubtedly would be intense.

The Marine Corps may, on the surface at least, lose more than it gains under such an agreement. It already

²²²Although OPCON of the EA-6B should rest with the Navy or Air Force, it should remain administratively within the FMF because the Corps' maintains a unique expeditionary maintenance and logistics capability for this aircraft.

possesses a nearly complete array of air and ground combat capabilities that are well-integrated and effective. It has developed this range of capabilities precisely because it has learned (through a somewhat selective remembrance of history) that the Navy exists first and foremost to protect its own aircraft carriers and that the Air Force tends to demand absolute control over Marine jet aircraft in theaters of war. What would be gained under this compromise - an effective division of labor and a greater degree of "jointness" - may not be worth all that much to many Marines, who see it as their business to fight and win wars in expeditionary environments. As far as the Marines are concerned, by the time the Army and Air Force arrive with their sustaining forces, it is usually time for the Marines to return to their ships or board chartered airliners and return to home base in order to refit and train for the next expeditionary task. Of course, the historical record since World War II suggests that, to the contrary, once major Marine formations are introduced ashore, they stay there for as long as the conflict lasts - be it an 'expeditionary' or 'developed' theater of war.

Regarding the Army, many of the soldiers who operate the long-range air defense systems like the Patriot have no great desire to work for the Air Force, even though their

weapon system is already in effect under a high degree of USAF/JFACC operational control. The Army also may not want to incur the expense of operating and maintaining fixed-wing jet aircraft after 45 years of the Air Force performing that function. Additionally, the Army's heavy investment in attack helicopters over the last ten years probably gives it nearly all of what it would ever require in the way of CAS on the future battlefield.

About the only service that may be happy with this proposal is the Air Force, which has shown a reluctance to dedicate the kind of resources deemed necessary by the Army and the Congress toward the CAS mission. Its institutional bias remains oriented toward the strategic bombing campaign, and it tends to favor aircraft featuring higher "fighter" qualities at the expense of "attack" qualities. The Air Force would probably be quite happy to rid its force structure of single-mission aircraft (like the A-10) and limited multi-mission aircraft (like the F-16) so that it could concentrate its resources on stealthy, high-performance aircraft. Senior Air Force officers waged a high-profile campaign in the fall of 1992 (prior to the release of Powell's Roles and Missions Report) to gain control of the Army's medium and high altitude missiles in return for (in effect) giving up its fixed-wing CAS

monopoly.²²³ The Army balked at that proposal, not wanting its "shield against enemy aircraft a hostage to Air Force funding priorities", but the Air Force has recently (October 1993) raised this issue again with the new administration in the hope of a different outcome.²²⁴

Curiously, the men and women who fly and maintain the A-10 might welcome such a swap, because they see the Air Force as slow to modernize the airplane and intent on moving it out of the active force and into the ANG as soon as possible. As has been observed by some, Air Force pilots often tend to place their loyalty and sense of

²²³see Barbara Opall, "U.S Air Force Plan Exhorts Shared Role for CAS in Services," Defense News July 27 - August 2, 1992, 18. This included the Air Force proposal to elevate all the services to the level of "primary" CAS mission performance, which was adopted by Powell in his report. Pentagon officials reportedly viewed this proposal as allowing "the Air Force to gracefully relinquish its title to CAS in favor of deep strike missions where the service is investing heavily in precision, standoff weapons".

²²⁴For the 1992 debate, see Neil Munro, "U.S. Army Resists Move by Air Force on Air Defense," Defense News, September 14-20, 1992, 50. The latest move by USAF officials is reported by Vago Muradian and Barbara Opall, "USAF Revives Theater Defense Debate," Defense News November 1-7, 1993, 4.

identification more with their particular mission and aircraft rather than with the Air Force as a whole.²²⁵

The Navy, as noted before, may not have any great objection to such a compromise, since it has openly recognized and even embraced the "enabling force" mission that places higher priority on expeditionary warfare. Having a Marine F/A-18 squadron with every carrier air wing would go a long way toward bridging the gap in combat aviation caused by the demise of the A-12 and the planned early retirement of the A-6 from the naval aviation inventory. The "enabling" and supporting role envisioned by the Navy's leaders for the foreseeable future does not seem to run contrary to the proposed roles and mission split, as long as the carrier-based deep strike mission is not completely deleted.

One option to pursue until the roles and missions statutes are revised (or if it is rejected) is to strengthen the level of operational control by unified commanders. As an example, the Army could establish an air command and control center at the corps-level that would perform the equivalent mission of a Marine Aircraft Wing, and as part of

²²⁵see Carl H. Builder, The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989) 32-33.

this it could exercise operational control over an Air Force CAS wing in addition to the command of the corps aviation and air defense brigades. As a *quid pro quo*, greater operational control over Army theater air defense units could be given to the theater air commander and/or JFACC.

This option may fall far short of a perfect solution to the roles and missions problem, but it would further improve joint integration and training at the operational and tactical levels of war. In fact, this second (OPCON) option may be better than the first (statutory) in that the peacetime operational subordination of some of the tactical divisions, wings, groups, and brigades of one service to the corps, air force, fleet, or MEF headquarters of another service would force them to develop a joint approach to warfighting that simply would not happen if contact between the services were (or remains) essentially limited to meetings at the four-star level.

Using the example of the "Atlantic Expeditionary Corps" proposed earlier in this chapter, the benefits of forming a joint Army-Marine corps-level headquarters with an attached Air Force CAS wing operationally controlled by the corps' Marine Aircraft Wing headquarters would be obvious. The level of integration and interoperability that could be attained by these units in peacetime would be significant,

aided further by the fact that all are located in the southeastern U.S. A rotating system of corps command between Army and Marine Corps three-stars might help ensure that the concept would be fully supported, and would help revive a tradition going back to the joint X Corps in 1950 in Korea. Of course, the standard partisan response to such a proposal would be to either (from the Army perspective) give a Marine division to an Army Corps or (from the Marine perspective) 'chop' an Army Light Division to a MEF. The concern of both is that these service formations are not really unique (and thus defensible in budgetary terms) if they don't maintain their separate existences and exclusive missions. It is highly ironic that, whereas a permanent exchange of divisions is scheduled to occur between German and American corps in NATO, a similar level of peacetime cooperation between the U.S. Army and Marine Corps is utterly unimaginable because of the perceived institutional threat posed by each to the other.²²⁶

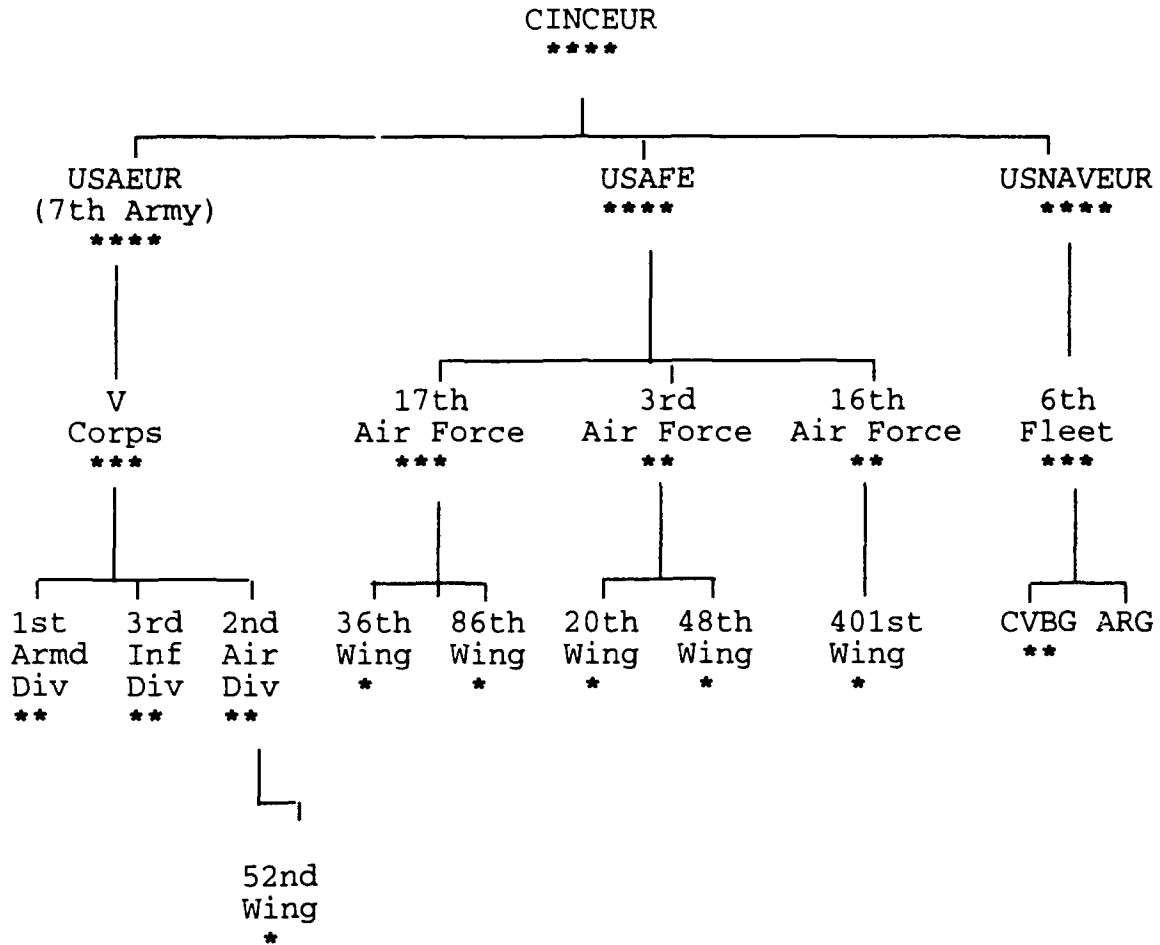
Perhaps the greatest value of such a move would be to create the ideal 'bridge' unit between rapid deployment,

²²⁶For a discussion of the planned NATO force structure, see William T. Johnson and Thomas-Durell Young, "Preparing for the NATO Summit: What Are the Pivotal Issues?," (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1993)

but light, formations like the XVIII Airborne Corps and follow-on Army and Air Force reinforcing units such as III Corps. This would go a long way toward ensuring a seamless flow of U.S. combat power from a contingency operation through a littoral or expeditionary war to a mature theater of war.

APPENDIX B

European Theater Command

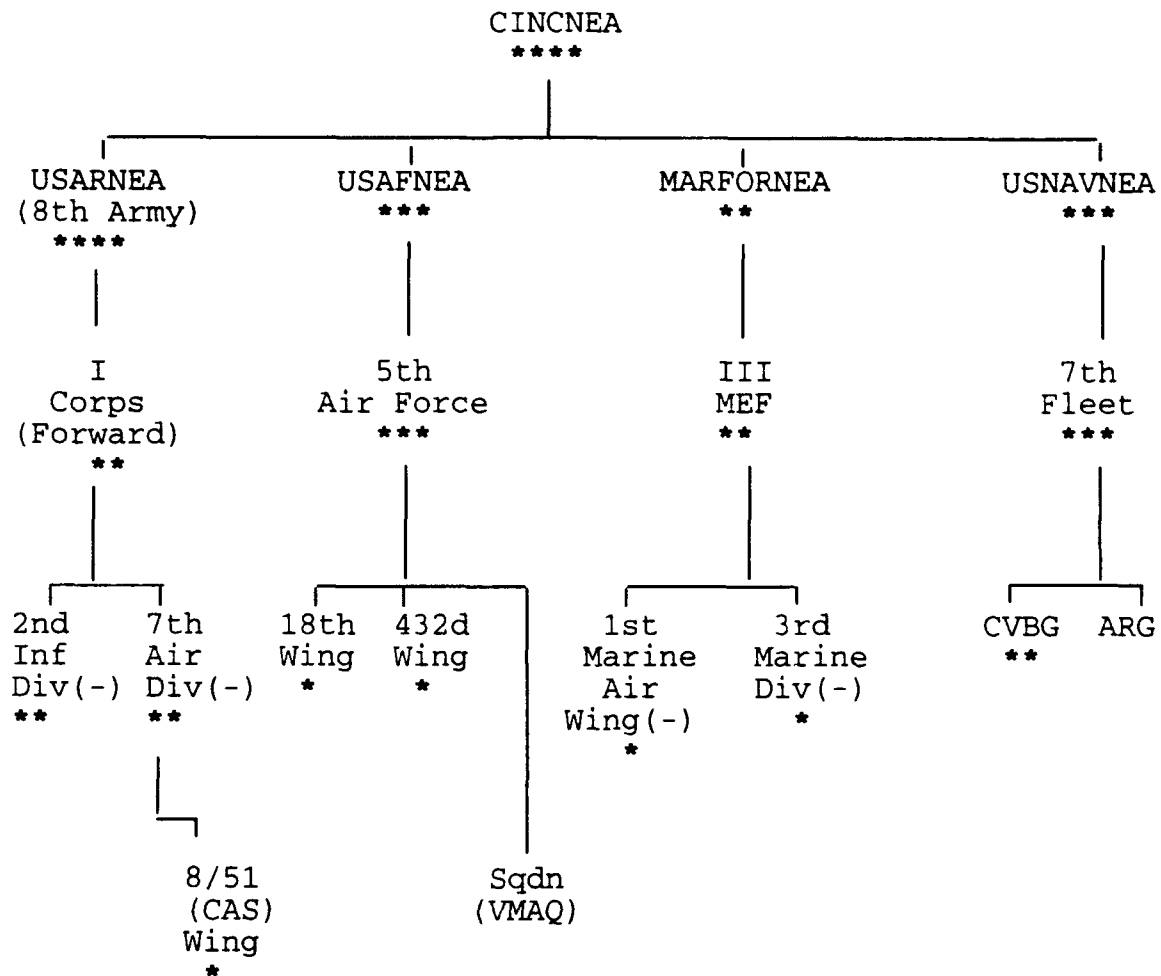


AOR: NATO and littoral seas

AOI: Eastern Europe
 European Russia (shared with JCS)
 North Africa
 Levant (shared with SWACOM/CENTCOM)

APPENDIX C

Northeast Asia (NEA) Theater Command

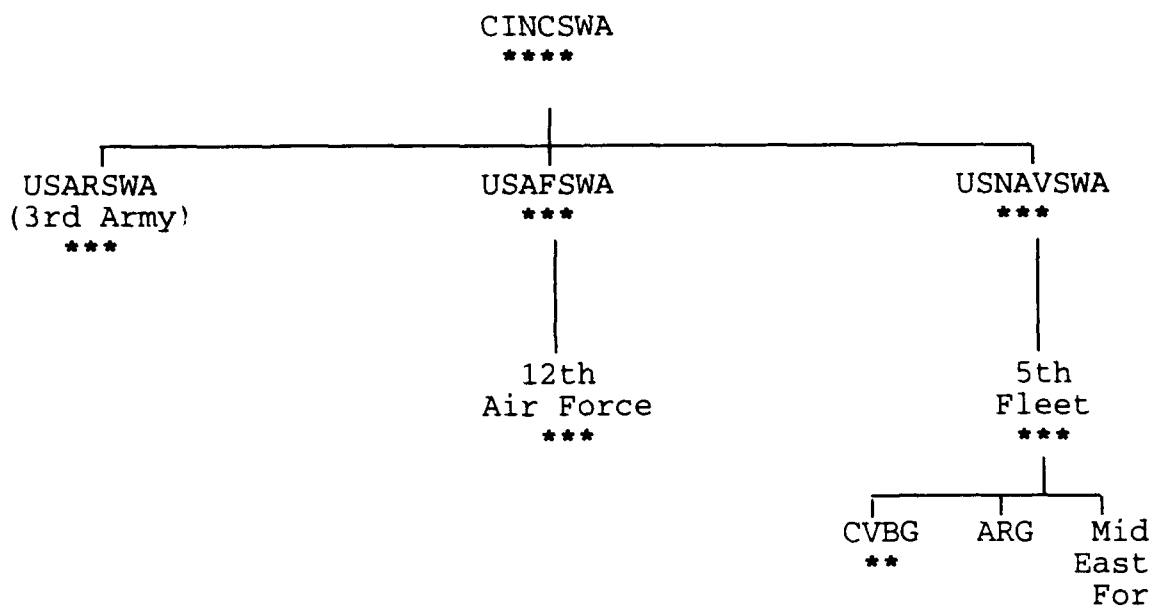


AOR: South Korea, Japan, and littoral seas

AOI: North Korea
 Russian Far East (shared with JCS)
 Eastern Manchuria (shared with PACOM)

APPENDIX D

Southwest Asia (SWA) Theater Command

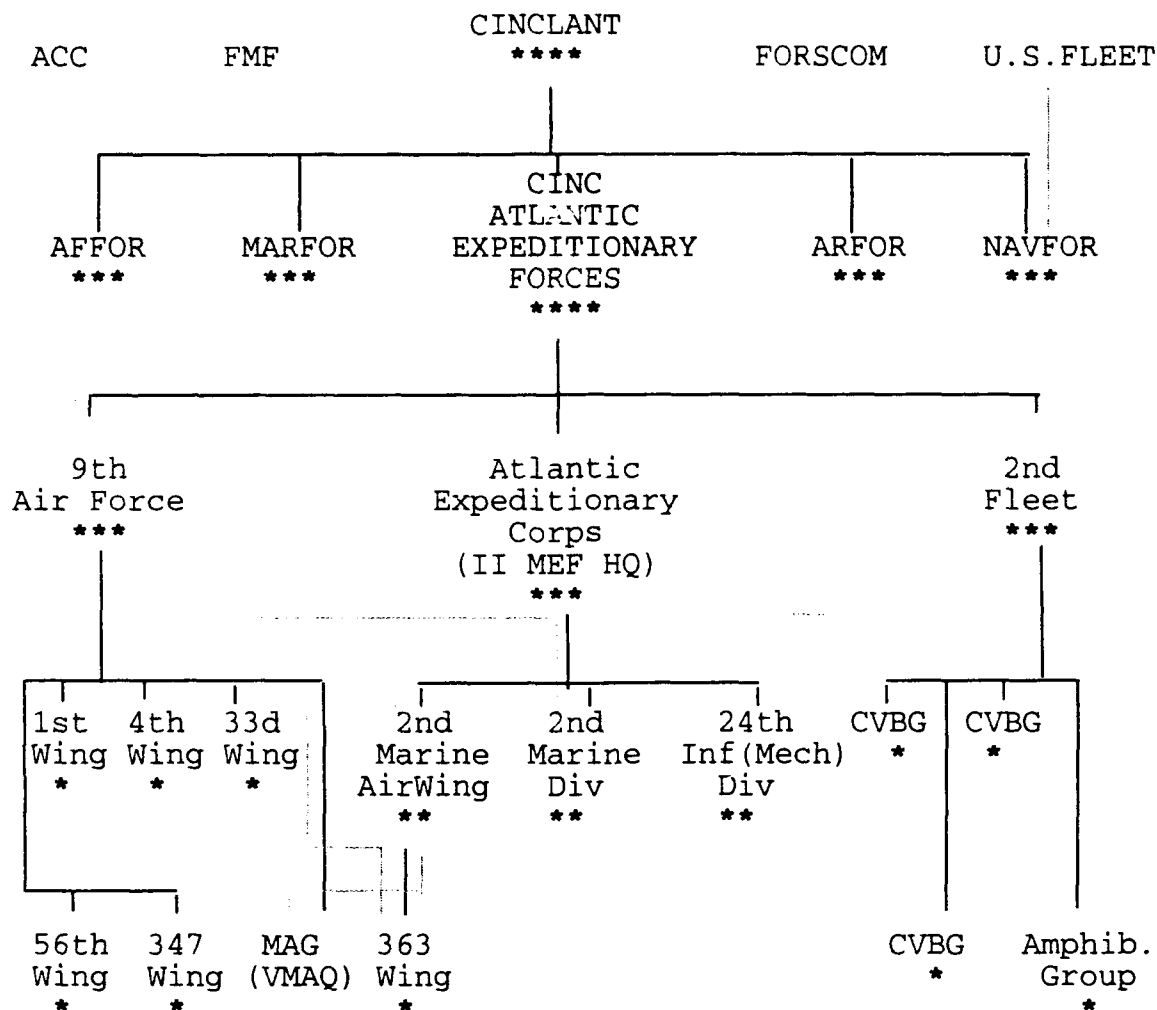


AOR: Iran, Iraq, Arabian Peninsula States and Gulf, Jordan, Egypt, Arabian and Red Seas.

AOI: Levant (shared with EUCOM), Pakistan (shared with PACOM), Horn of Africa,

APPENDIX E

Atlantic Region/Area Command



OPERATIONAL CONTROL
ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL

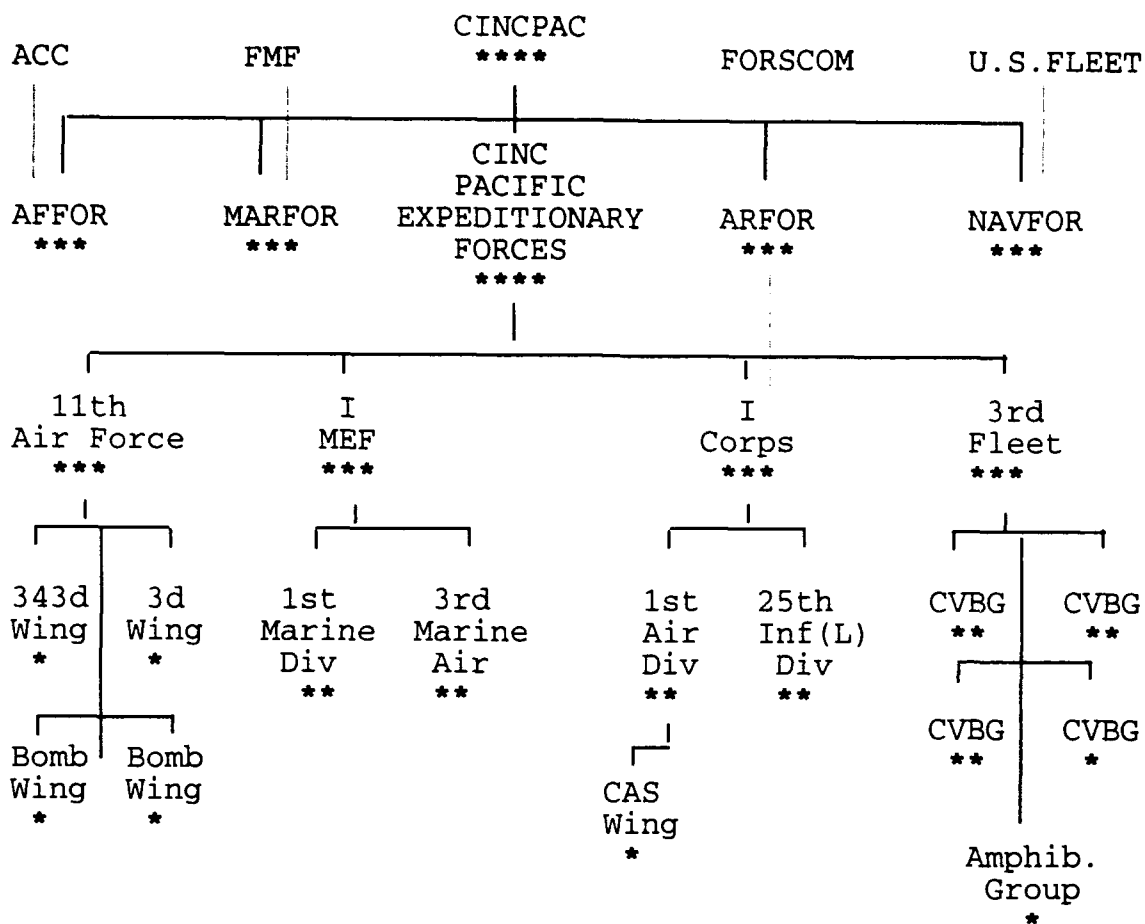
AOR: Central and South America and littoral waters, sub-Saharan Africa and littoral waters, Atlantic Ocean

AOI: Approaches to Western Europe (as part of SACLANT AOR)

CINC Atlantic Expeditionary Forces is dual-hatted as the Deputy CINCLANT as well as a provisional sub-unified CINC.

APPENDIX F

Pacific Region/Area Command



AOR: South and Southeast Asia, China (East Manchuria shared with Northeast Asia Command), Pacific Ocean Area (less Northeast Asian and South American littoral seas), Indian Ocean Area (less Southwest Asia and African littoral seas)

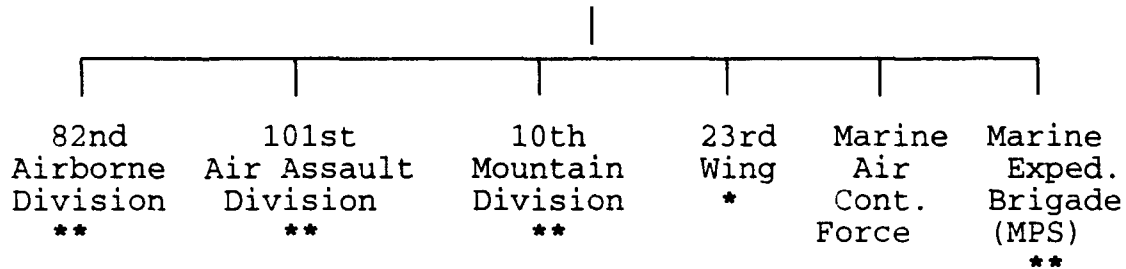
AOI: Pakistan

CINC Pacific Expeditionary Forces is dual-hatted as the Deputy CINCPAC as well as the provisional sub-unified CINC

APPENDIX G

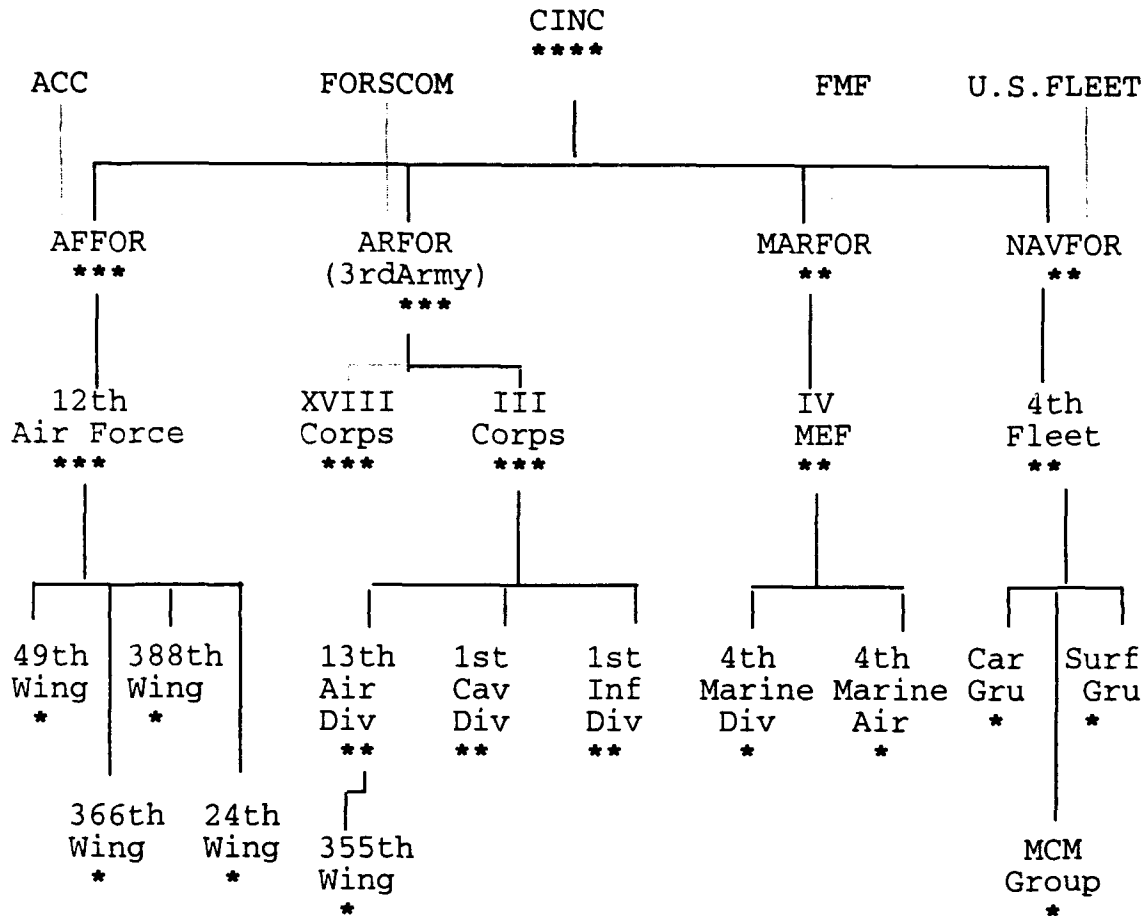
Strategic Rapid Reaction/Contingency Force

Joint Rapid Deployment
Task Force
(Headquarters XVIII Corps)



APPENDIX H

Strategic Mobilization/Reinforcing Forces Command



CINC has CONUS ground defense, civil defense, and distaster relief responsibilities.

High-level Operational and Administrative Military Chain of Command

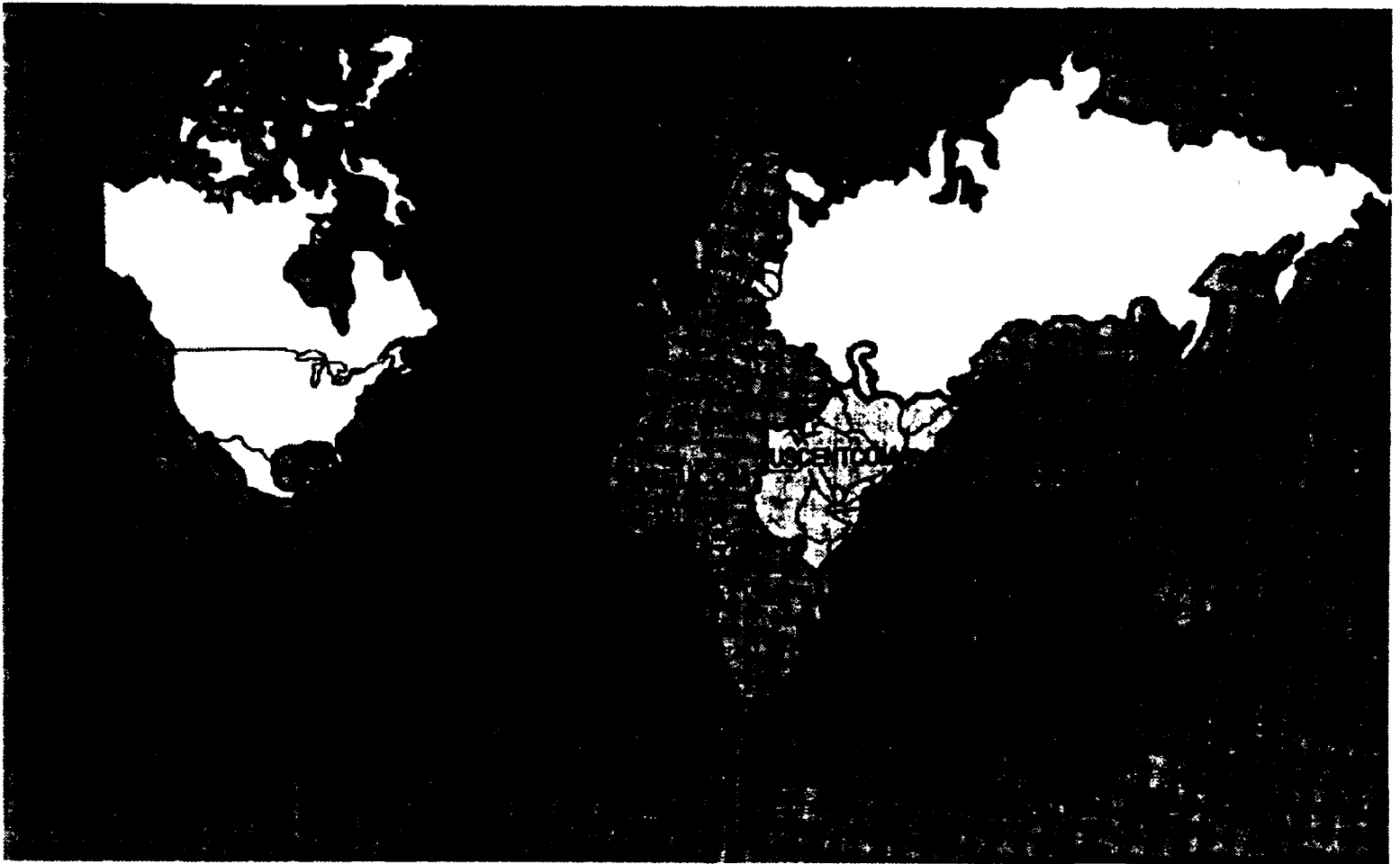


APPENDIX J

**UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN BOUNDARIES
(PRESENT)**

95 W

100 E



92 W

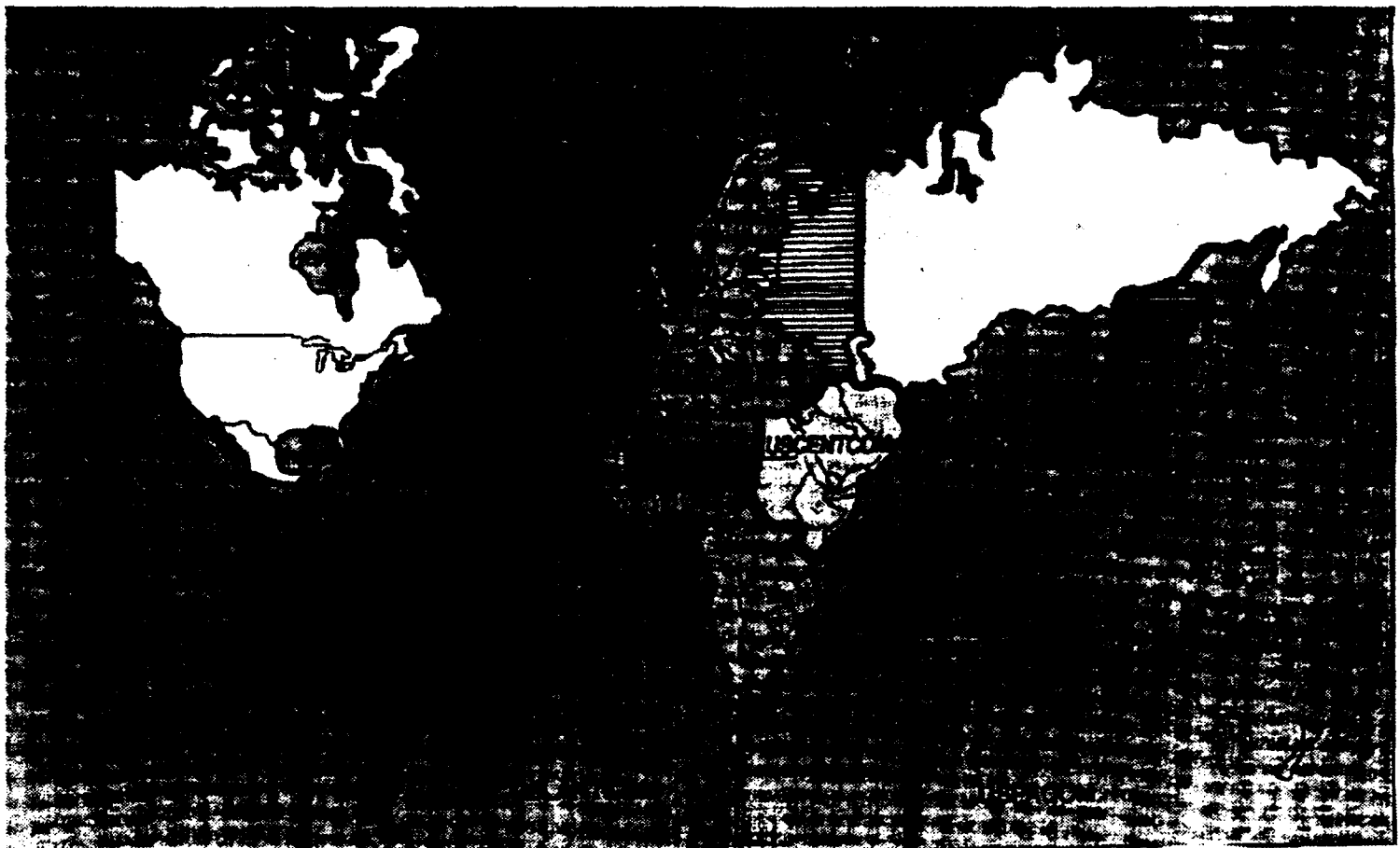
17 E

Source: "Report on the Roles, Missions, and Functions of the
Armed Forces of the United States of America,"
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, February
1993.

APPENDIX K
UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN BOUNDARIES
(PROPOSED)

95 W

100 E



92 W

65 E

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